

*The Story of Sweet Briar College*



THE STORY OF

*Sweet Briar College*

BY

MARTHA LOU LEMMON STOHLMAN

*With warmest wishes to Miss Morenus  
from Martha Lou Stohlman*



THE ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION  
OF SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE

1956

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*To Sweet Briar students, past and present*

## *Foreword*

THE READER of this book will have the pleasure of seeing unfolded the story of Sweet Briar College. Founded fifty years ago, through the idealism and generosity of a family of culture and piety, our college has sought to educate young women in the best traditions of American life. To be sure, Sweet Briar is not alone in such an aim. Other fine institutions of higher learning have also been forces to the good in the lives of their students, faculty, staff, trustees, and graduates.

In my judgment, what makes Sweet Briar different from other colleges is the particular way in which a happy balance or blend is achieved here with respect to values and objectives. We believe in a spirit of free inquiry, nurtured in a climate of opinion that includes the best of our intellectual, cultural, and ethical traditions. We do have the freedom and the time to enable each student to experience the challenge of the good teacher in the best academic environment. As this history makes plain, it has not been easy to secure the needed material factors for this environment—the salaries, the buildings, and the books—but the three essential ingredients—idealism, loyalty, and freedom—Sweet Briar has had and will continue to have, if I read aright the sentiments of her family of students, teachers, and alumnae.

ANNE GARY PANNELL



## Introduction

THE IDEA of the publication of the history of Sweet Briar College was not new when the present project was actually begun. The members of the Amherst County Sweet Briar Alumnae Club felt an especially close kinship with the background of the college and in 1952 and 1953 they made the first financial contributions to begin this work. Spurred by these gifts and by the approach of the college's fiftieth anniversary, a faculty committee under the chairmanship of the late Miss Eva Sanford began collecting information from local records and from personal reminiscences of early students, faculty, and staff members. Then in June 1954 the executive board of the Alumnae Association voted to underwrite the project financially and to find someone who could bring all the miscellaneous materials together in a composite picture of the college's first fifty years.

A real inspiration led that group to Martha Lou Lemmon Stohlman, who was graduated magna cum laude in 1934. She was finishing a term of office as chairman of the Alumnae Fund, and her loyalty to the college as well as her ready wit and skill of expression had been ably demonstrated. There was only one drawback. She and her husband, William Frederick Stohlman, recently retired professor of art and archaeology at Princeton University, had made plans to spend a year abroad, beginning in April 1955. Mrs. Stohlman agreed, however, to postpone her departure and write the Sweet Briar history with the understanding that there would be a committee to act in a critical and advisory capacity. The following alumnae were appointed: Alma Martin Rotnem, '36, Betty Braxton Preston, '43, and Nancy Nalle Lea, '37, from Princeton, New Jersey; Frances Gregory, '36, Elizabeth Taylor Valentine, '23, and Julia Sadler de Coligny, '34, from Richmond, Virginia; Margaret Banister, '16 from Washington, D.C.; and Martha von Briesen, '31, director of public relations,



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Margaret Cornwell Schmidt, '37, alumnae secretary, and Helen McMahon, '23, former alumnae secretary, at Sweet Briar. In addition, several members of the faculty were asked to serve, including Miss Lucy S. Crawford, Mrs. Marion Benedict Rollins, and Miss Lysbeth W. Muncy.

Thus the project was launched, and as Mrs. Stohlman finished her first draft of each chapter, it was circulated, read, criticised, and returned with notes and liberal comments. Later, there were several meetings at Sweet Briar for general discussion with the author. It was nothing short of miraculous to achieve harmony among so many individuals, each with her own definite tastes in emphasis and expression.

As all undertakings of this kind have a way of doing, it took more time at every step than had been imagined at the outset. In August 1955, shortly after she had mailed the revised manuscript to the committee, Mrs. Stohlman sailed for a year's residence in Switzerland. When the committee met later at Sweet Briar to appraise the work at this point, it became apparent that the geographical barriers would necessitate the appointment of an editorial committee on campus to complete details of reorganization and editing. Miss von Briesen, who already possessed wide experience with handling historical data of the college, was made chairman of the editorial committee which included Mrs. Rollins, Miss Muncy and Elizabeth Bond Wood, '34, who had succeeded Mrs. Schmidt as alumnae secretary in June 1955. The greatest possible credit goes to this small group for the countless hours of painstaking work on the editing of the manuscript, with all that an assignment of this kind entails. In addition, Miss von Briesen was delegated to take complete charge of arrangements with the Princeton University Press for the printing of the history and its release to the public in book form.

Mrs. William Dew, Miss Ethel Ramage and Miss Harriet Rogers were the three members of the community, and Mr. Archibald G. Robertson, Mr. Buford Scott, and Mr. Thomas C. Boushall were the three members of the board of overseers whom the committee selected to read the

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manuscript. We are most appreciative of their helpful criticisms and suggestions. And always throughout the entire evolution of the manuscript there was the interest and encouragement of President Anne Gary Pannell.

It is a tribute to the author that she was able to preserve her identity in the face of so much good advice. With patience and good humor she listened and heeded but never sacrificed her own essential style or point of view. She has succeeded in giving us an accurate and enjoyable narrative of the first fifty years of Sweet Briar. It has been a most interesting and rewarding experience for all of us who have had an opportunity to participate in this project, which in itself exemplifies the spirit of cooperation and unity of purpose that is apt to invade the minds of all who come under the influence of this, our college.

JULIA SADLER DE COLIGNY, *chairman*  
Committee for the publication of the  
history of Sweet Briar College

June 1956  
Richmond, Virginia

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# The Flower Family

## The Story of Sweet Briar College

## CHAPTER I

# *The Fletcher Family*

1763-1900

WHO FOUNDS A COLLEGE? One scarcely expects to attribute a college to a single influence, and in the case of Sweet Briar College there are at least four sources of origin. Without any one of them the Sweet Briar of today would not exist.

Sweet Briar stems from a family, a board of directors, a young president, and the small group of students and professors who constituted the first student body and faculty. All these may truly be said to be the founders of Sweet Briar College.

The family, which held a tradition favoring inquiry and learning, provided physical resources and the seed of an idea which on the morning of October 30, 1900, set in motion a long series of events.

Near midnight on the clear frosty night of October 29 a hack drew up to the back door of the great house on the Sweet Briar plantation. The horses stamped the ground as two men jumped down and helped two women out. The four quietly mounted the steps and were let into the house with a low word of greeting from Mrs. Farrar who lived in the cottage standing almost hidden in the boxwood at the side of the plantation house: "Good evening, Mr. Gray. Good evening, Mrs. Payne—Mr. Payne—Eliza."

Eliza Payne, in her twenty-first year, walked into the house with her thoughts engaged in that stubborn protest which overwhelms us at the news of sudden death: "But Miss Indie seemed so *well* yesterday! When Papa and I walked towards the house she saw us coming and went to the door herself. She raised the board that lay across



the door on the hooks and opened for us. She was really glad to see us and she was so pleased with Mama's bread and preserves. She said she felt much better—and she looked so well. When we left she kissed me goodbye and said, 'Tell your mother I send her a thousand times as much love as she sends me.' That was right much for Miss Indie to say. We knew she had a warm heart but she didn't say things like that very often. That's the last thing I ever heard her say. And now it's the last thing I ever *will* hear her say."

She looked gravely around the familiar house, which now seemed suddenly unfamiliar. Everyone stood silent for a moment, then Mrs. Farrar voiced the question which had come to all of them after they had heard of Indiana Williams' fatal heart attack:

"Whatever'll become of Sweet Briar now?"

Mr. Payne shook his head. "That is something no one knows, Mrs. Farrar. No one knows."

Mrs. Payne had no time for pondering the question. The nearest undertaker was in Lynchburg twelve miles away and to her fell the sad business of laying out her friend, Mrs. Williams. She grieved for Mrs. Williams; she especially grieved that she had had to die all alone in the house. But Mrs. Payne also knew what a lonely time it had been for Indiana Williams. Eleven years had passed since her husband's death and before that they had had five years of mourning together the passing of their daughter, their only child. There had been little enough brightness in Miss Indie's life for many a year. More and more she had turned away from others and become absorbed in herself. In summer she had stayed alone at Sweet Briar with only her colored servant, Robert Rucker, to tend her few wants. Winters she had spent with the family of John Payne in Lynchburg and, now that they had moved to Amherst only three miles from Sweet Briar, she had gone to them there.

"Day after tomorrow she would have moved over with us again for the winter." Mrs. Payne permitted herself

this one speculation, then she resolutely summoned Eliza to follow her and went upstairs to look for Mrs. Williams' black silk dress.

The passing of Indiana Fletcher Williams was more than the death of a woman. It seemed to be the final snapping crash of a sturdy branch from a tree well rooted in the rocky soil of Vermont. Indiana was the daughter of Elijah Fletcher who early in life had left the Vermont farm of his father Jesse to seek his fortune in the south.

The Fletcher farm located near Ludlow in southern Vermont had nurtured fifteen children. Jesse was not a rich man but his children had gained from him and their mother a love of trees and grain and stock and all growing things, an appreciation of books, and a good share of initiative and persistence.

Jesse Fletcher's formal education had stopped when at the age of fourteen he had entered the Continental Army in 1778. Five years later he was married and living with his wife and small daughter in a log cabin on the farm where he was to spend the rest of his life. Both farm and family grew; eventually a pleasant constellation of white buildings on wide green Vermont lawns surrounded the large farm house in which lived a family of ten sons and five daughters.

At least three of the sons—Elijah, Calvin, and Stoughton—made distinguished marks for themselves. Calvin in his teens set out to make his way in the world with a copy of Pope's poems in an otherwise empty pocket. The random route of a boy seeking his fortune took him through the Boston shipyards, left him working a while in a Pennsylvania brickyard, and at last brought him to Urbana, Ohio, where he found a real calling. He read law with the Hon. James Cooley, who was afterwards United States chargé d'affaires in Peru. He then went for a short time to Virginia where his older brother Elijah was established, and in Richmond he was admitted to the bar in 1820. He promptly returned to the middlewest, stayed in Urbana



to marry and start a family, and then moved off on a fourteen-day trip by covered wagon to the new state of Indiana.

The capital of Indiana had just been created—with more sense of geometry than of city-planning. When it was designated it was a mere dot on a map in the exact center of the state, with no sign of a settlement there. Calvin Fletcher was the first lawyer to arrive and, occupying one of the few new houses which constituted Indianapolis in 1822, he promptly began what was to be a life of long service to Indianapolis in many departments: organizing the state bank, acting as prosecuting attorney, helping to form the first fire company, serving as trustee of schools, spending five years in the state senate and at last refusing to run for the national Congress in order to devote more time to his family which eventually included nine children.

The zest and uncertainty of new projects drove Calvin on. He was up at four o'clock in the morning, had settled his paper work by breakfast, spent the rest of the day going from farm to bank to office, "always on the move, ever active, ever accomplishing important results." There were many such tributes to him written by fellow-townsmen at his death in his sixty-eighth year, after a fall from his horse.

Stoughton, Calvin's brother who was ten years his junior, also went to Indianapolis—the whole way from Ludlow on horseback, shortly after his father's death in 1831. In the rapidly growing settlement he soon found an opening for his business talents. He worked steadily and earnestly and became a man of substance.

Stoughton lived and died in Indianapolis, but he had Vermont in his heart. As a present to his third wife he built "Rockside," a roomy house on land adjacent to his old home. There he and his bride could take refuge from the summer heat of Indianapolis. And there his son Allen

had the opportunity to become acquainted with his grandfather's home and the place where his father had grown up. Allen's heart also turned to Vermont. When he retired from the banking career in Indianapolis which he had taken over from his father, he built a large stone house on Chuckle Hill, a few miles down the road from Fletcher Farm. He lived there with his wife and three children and devoted himself alternately to business in New York City and to politics in Vermont where he served in the state legislature and in 1912 was elected governor.

Allen had acquired Jesse's and Lucy's old farm, together with Stoughton's "Rockside," and after his death his widow incorporated and endowed the combined properties to be used "for anything with an educational purpose." The Society of Vermont Craftsmen now runs a school at Fletcher Farm which throughout the summer fills its section of the valley with a hum of happy busy-ness. Allen Fletcher, Jr., who lives in Ludlow and his sister Fanny B. Fletcher who summers in the valley are both on the executive committee of this school which tutors weavers, potters and painters. Jesse's big barn has been a full-fledged summer theater but at present shelters painters of old-American designs who make exquisite trays and boxes. All the bedspreads and quilts the farm could yield, some of them made by Jesse's wife Lucy, have been fashioned into the lovely stage curtain which now hangs shut. This bedding was removed from the attic of the farmhouse, a room sheltering all manner of things.

When Allen Fletcher came into possession of the farm back in the nineties, a cursory inspection of the attic contents revealed, among many other items, a keg, a small keg into which had been carefully placed a packet of letters. Time had made them fragile, and there was so much else to deal with that the letters were left there.

In the summer of 1953 Fanny's and Allen's sister, Mary Fletcher Charlton, was visiting them and curiosity led her to investigate the attic once again. There was the keg with



its bundle of letters which had passed a quiet century under the eaves. A thousand snows had fallen a few feet above them; rains had come; winds had blown; the sun had beamed hot on the shingles. The paper had been damp and then dried out; it had been moist again, then it had grown crisp. The sheets were so delicate that Mary was almost afraid to unfold them after she had tentatively opened one. But she saw that it was from Elijah, her great-uncle, Jesse's sixth child—the one who had gone to Virginia.

Mary carried the keg downstairs and unfolded a long story.

The keg contained more than fifty letters in a generally legible hand, written by Elijah from the time just before his graduation from college until his father's death in 1831. With few exceptions they are addressed to Jesse, and throughout they show a real effort to inform his father of all Elijah's experiences and observations. The reader gets from the letters a clear impression of the young man and his surroundings, a bit of current national politics, and a friendly interest in the many people who appear in his pages. Elijah was at great pains to set down his reactions to the country around him, its people and their customs; his own thoughts on religion, philosophy, and education; notes on farming methods, crops, and prices; and a great deal of comment and advice on family problems.

The first letter reveals Elijah as a newly-transferred senior from Middlebury College to the University of Vermont:

Dear Sir, Burlington [Vt.] April 20, 1810

After I left home with my brethren in the Stage, with some difficulty occasioned by bad going, we arrived at Crarys about ten of the Clock—there I parted with Michael and Timothy not without a tear of affection at the thought of a long and perhaps final separation. . . .

The next day I arrived at Middlebury and found . . . in the Middlebury post Office another letter from Raleigh North Carolina renewing their requests to have me engage to teach their Academy—Obviating the objections which I stated by stating that I might defer the time to the first of August—which to be sure is earlier than our Commencement—but the thought of six hundred dollars per year has such influence upon my mind—that I am employed in contriving a plan for affecting the object—I conversed with the government at Middlebury on the subject who thought they could not give me a degree without I tarried till Commencement I have come on to Burlington who tell me they will give me a degree without staying till commencement. Now if I can borrow fifty dollars of money and you will be so good as to sell and trust me for a horse I shall be ready for the expedition give me your advise on this interesting subject as soon as possible—I shall remain here during the vacation at Mid—if not longer—write me as soon as possible that I may know what course to take—

ELIJAH FLETCHER

The next letter was written from Albany on July 6, 1810. The University of Vermont at Burlington had given Elijah his degree and he was on his way to become a school master in the south. On his Morgan horse he traveled fifteen days going from Albany to Washington City, as it was called then. The young man, trying desperately to save the twenty dollars he had raised for the journey, was often hungry. When he left an inn in the morning, to save money he would refuse breakfast, saying that he did not feel well; later he would stop at a farm house for a modest snack. In Pennsylvania the farmers offered him sour milk which he did not relish at all, but he drank it because there was nothing else to drink.

"Thus," he wrote, "did pride struggle with poverty. Thus did I support the character of a liberal gentleman, and lived like a poor beggar eating nothing during the day but a little bread and cheese for dinner. . . . From this



trial I have learned that we can accomplish almost anything, if we have courage, and perseverance—I ate only five regular meals from Albany to the City of Washington—I had when I arrived there eight dollars. . . .”

In Washington City he met a young man recently engaged to teach at the academy in Alexandria, Virginia. The gentleman had friends in North Carolina and when he heard that Elijah was bound thither he suggested that they trade their commissions, Elijah going to Alexandria in his place. This proved agreeable and the switch was made. Elijah spent a happy year in the home of a General Mason in “one of the largest handsomest and most commercial cities in Virginia” and taught languages and mathematics to some twenty boys.

This period of relative ease gave him a chance to regain the peace of mind which had been lost in some unhappy event in Vermont that had run him and apparently others into debt. He was gloomily preoccupied with questions of money but he made stout resolutions: “I have launched my leaky barge upon the variously undulating waves of the world—I mean to make christian honesty but not christian hypocrisy my helm perseverance and ambition my gole—whether my voyage will prove prosperous or otherwise at what haven I shall at last land God only knows—”

The “voyage” continued in May at the close of the school year when Elijah accepted the invitation of Congressman Garland to proceed to New Glasgow, Virginia, to preside over the academy there. New Glasgow was in Amherst County in the foothills of the Blue Ridge mountains, less than fifty miles south of Charlottesville. The eventful trip down is well recounted, not omitting mention of the outrageous charge of half a dollar made by a Baptist minister-tailor in Fredericksburg who mended his pantaloons, nor the two breakdowns of the stage in the two days and night on the road from Alexandria to Charlottesville, nor the visit to the “Philosopher of Monticello.”

On May 11, 1811, the new president of the academy, astride one of Congressman Garland's horses, rode into New Glasgow, the “village of about 50 houses butifully situated high and healthy” where he was to pass some seven years and was to land at last in “that haven” upon which he had earlier speculated. He described the academy as being “most as large as Middlebury College” (although there was but one other teacher), with some of the pupils coming from as far away as Richmond. There was “a female academy . . . taught in a different building.” He instructed in Latin, Greek, and French, and later had a private class in French for girls.

He believed in the education of women. In advising his father about the upbringing of his sisters he wrote, “A girl will be more respected with an education than with wealth. I think female education is too much neglected—they are the ones who have the first education of children and ought to be qualified to instruct them correctly.” To prove that these were not mere words he added, “I shall send you a hundred dollars next month by which you may be enabled to assist Lucy.” This was one-ninth of his annual salary.

He was deeply interested in the education of his younger brothers and sisters. Hardly a letter went home without some word on where they should be schooled or an exhortation to young Stephen to master his Latin—with a suggestion or two for studying his grammar.

And as for himself, he enjoyed teaching: “I live in the greatest harmony and friendship with my pupils. . . .” he testified. “I try to live upon the same terms with them that a kind parent would with his children. . . . The business of instructing was to me when I first commenced laborious and fatiguing. . . . I worried myself then more than was necessary—”

His own education continued along with his teaching. He read law for a while, although he had no intent to practice. And back at Alexandria he had spent some of his salary being tutored in French in the evening and he



planned taking up Spanish and Italian. "I can read a Latin author or Greek or French almost as easy as an English one," he once mentioned—and, again: "I have been reading today and for some time back Thucydides history of the Peloponnesian Wars and Voltairs Tragedies in the original—" He owns to finding consolation in his books when he is "some times in darkness and doubt and difficulty. . . . I have comforters in these hours—I have my Bible—I have Seneca which I peruse daily with pleasure and attention—"

The young man shows a feeling for quality in his personal appearance and surroundings. He makes appreciative reference to the good cloth from his mother's loom and regrets the poor draping of the clothes available in New Glasgow. He takes pride in beautifying his bachelor establishment by planting Lombardy poplars and grass seed in the door yard, and "rose bushes right under my window—and . . . some vines which will run up on my house and make a little canopy over my window."

Elijah Fletcher emerges from his letters as a sober, thoughtful and constructive young man with no nonsense about him. He may seem so because his letters were addressed chiefly to his father who was far from light-hearted under burdens of debt, responsibilities of rearing small children, and consternation at the behavior of some of his grown children. Many of Elijah's letters open in the tone of this one: "Your letter breathes the accustomed melancholy doubt and difficulty. . . ."

Once in a little note to his sixteen-year-old sister Lucy, Elijah lightens his touch: "I believe I am quite a favorite of the ladies around here—They . . . send me a good many presents"—cheeses (which were rare), a prayer book, pound cake, and from one came "stockings knit with her own hands . . . and the girls when they come to recite bring me fruit some times with the first letters of their names marked upon them &c. &c.—So you must not think me vain if I conclude that I am pretty well esteemed—"

A real note of gaiety appears when Elijah has paid off

his debts and in December 1812 is able to send a hundred dollars to his family as a gift. He thoroughly enjoys himself in bequeathing:

"To my Mother—the best I ever had—the best I shall have—The best I ever can have . . . fifteen dollars for the purpose of purchasing a gold necklace—a ring of affection with E.F. marked on it—a pound of the best tea and a bottle of good snuff—

"To my Sister Fanny in consideration of . . . much good will she always seemed to bear me—I will and bequeath seven dollars to appropriate to any purpose she pleaseth. . . .

"To my Brother Jesse—Because I remember his friendship when I was in poverty—because I sometimes wore his breeches and sometimes boots . . . &c &c—because I have gotten his old portmanteau hanging up in my closet and his old pocket book laying before me on my table full of all my old papers &c—I bequeath ten dollars—a small compensation for so many favors!—

"To my Dear Sister Lucy—I give seven dollars to purchase a wedding gown if she marry a rich man and a ring—but if she marry a poor virtuous industrious . . . man—She must buy a set of silver tea Spoons—and if it so happen that she marrieth not at all—she may use it as seemeth meet—

"To my Brother Stephen: . . . ten dollars . . . He must buy him a Johnson's dictionary with it and read a chapter in the Greek testament into the bargain every morning—Johnsons large dictionary—with the pronunciation and derivation of words

"To my good Sister Laura . . . fifteen dollars . . . with hopes her kind Father will add as much more for the assistance in giving a quarters schooling—

"Now unto my Brother Calvin and Miles—I will five dollars each to buy calves and raise stock

"To my Sister Louisa—3 dollars to buy a new gown &c &c—and to Brother Stoughton whom I hardly know—one dollar to buy a lamb—

"Lastly unto my ever dear and respected Father I will



and bequeath twenty dollars . . . to his own benefit and behalf for ever—If he please he may buy a good watch and have E.F. inscribed on the back—"This is without the common solemnities and you will execute it when you think proper—"

If Elijah's portrait shows a thin-lipped mouth, compressed and not too ready to smile, perhaps it may be due in part to the characteristic answer from Jesse to these joyful, open-handed "bequests." It caused Elijah to write this pathetic reply to him: "I am sorry, daddy, you are so poor in *spirit*—You say the rich cannot sympathise with the poor and intimate as tho . . . I . . . wanted feeling—I know my letter was much of it nonsense—& you must know I intended you to dispose of the money as you thought proper—after reading the first page of your letter I stopped—I laid down the letter—and cried—It made me so melancholly to think my good Father was not happier—"

As the year 1812 was drawing to a close Elijah wrote a long letter which proceeded leisurely through an account of a jaunt to a mountain called Tobacco Row, through a proposal to lend money and go shares with a clothier, if his father can find one who would like to set up in New Glasgow, to—at last—the point: he is planning to get married. His approach to the question is filial and discreet:

"I want your advise and directions. . . . I have long been intimate with a most amiable accomplished sensible Lady—of one of the most rich extensive respectable families in the State—She is Cousin to the present Vice President [William Harris Crawford]—who moved from this place to Georgia some years ago—The family is generally noted for their talents and respectability—Every thing is agreeable I never have & I am sensible I never shall meet with another so interesting. . . . The only thing which could dissuade me would be the fear of more lasting separation from my parents. . . . After the most mature de-

liberation I am persuaded it will be to my advantage to my comfort and to my happiness—but dear Sir I refer it to you—judge for me . . . I will pay deference to your judgment—"

The Crawfords are further described later: "They live in a two story upright house painted white—They have their carpets on their floors and every thing in the genteel style—Mr. Crawford is a man between fifty and sixty quite grey headed—educated at Princeton—formerly a distinguished Lawyer—Mrs. Crawford is a most amiable woman—the young Ladies distinguished for their sense and accomplishments—They dress in their silks daily but have too much good sense to be proud The young Lady I anticipate making my future companion is devoid of all affectation and common prudery of modern girls—She is sincere candid intelligent and sensible—" He fails to mention her name—which was Maria Antoinette.

Jesse could find no warm words to offer on the subject, but the wedding took place in April 1813. Elijah wrote, "Although you are most silent in approving my late condition I hope we shall neither have cause to lament it—" He never referred to the wedding itself and his later report on married life is laconic: ". . . my situation is not materially changed—I think I can say with truth it is more agreeable than when a single man—I work my own garden though it is rather pleasure than necessity that makes me do it—"

Actually, the marriage was reasonably happy. The new husband found that his wife showed "as much superiority in her management of domestic affairs as I thought she did amiable loveliness before I married her—" But Elijah had complied with his father's request "and never shown Maria your letters—There are a great many family secrets that I never shall communicate—" He also wrote: "We have no children and hope and pray we never shall have any—children may some time prove a source of comfort and consolation to parents but from all my experience and observation—They more frequently prove a vexation.



... I trust our mutual affection will be such we shall always find a consolation in each other. . . ."

In May 1814 Elijah contemplated a change of career. "I have husbanded my talents to the best advantage—I have got something of an estate but it is not in money. It is real estate and land and slaves are not productive in war times—This will not always be the case—I have determined to relinquish my employment as president of this institution—I find it laborious and confining. . . . I am this year cultivating a plantation—" He mentioned corn and he had set out cabbages purchased at twenty-five cents the hundred.

A year later he became a planter in earnest, for his father-in-law Mr. Crawford "for seven weeks bore . . . illness with the fortitude of a Philosopher and died with the composure and resignation of a Christian—He was a man of extensive concerns and great estate—He left his affairs much deranged and unsettled—" And to Elijah fell the arduous task of managing his estate. There were four plantations for Elijah to manage himself and three which were rented. Every two or three weeks he visited the four, one of which was fifteen miles away.

The planter's life proved to be considerably different from the schoolmaster's. "I have a good opportunity," he wrote, "to discover the rascality of my Fellow Creatures—my little experience would present a gloomy picture of human depravity—" But he had a firm notion of his own position: "I am determined to maintain my rights and don't consider it any curse to have some enemies—"

Elijah had some enemies. As years went by he acquired more and more property, much of which came to him through defaulted debt. This mode of enrichment rarely creates a warm relation between the man who loses and the man who gains. Likewise, when many in a region are forced to borrow money—as they were in Amherst County during those depressed years—barriers often arise between lender and borrowers. There are signs that such barriers

did exist; there were some who did not shrink from saying bitterly that Elijah Fletcher's wealth grew from usury.

There were others who found Elijah's rise due to superior knowledge and management, which they found conspicuously lacking in the benighted agricultural methods of some of his neighbors. From the moment Mr. Crawford died and Elijah had the immediate task of marketing four or five thousand dollars' worth of corn and tobacco, the schoolmaster showed every sign of being a farmer who knew what he was about. He soon revealed himself also as a man who was willing and able to extend his labors into other fields.

Shortly after the summer of 1817, when the prospering son at long last paid a visit to his family in Ludlow, he and Maria moved from New Glasgow into Lynchburg. Eventually they were comfortably set up there in a large home on an extensive lot down near James River. The red brick house had a spacious room on either side of a center hallway and a row of rooms ran across the back in a half-story; beyond them a porch the width of the house gave onto a huge back yard surrounded by a red brick wall which invited little boys to run along its undulating top. Several outbuildings were partially concealed by large willows which cast a welcome shade, and Elijah had planted other trees about the ground—fir, English walnut, mimosa and tall tree-box.

In 1820 his brother Calvin whom he had not seen in ten years visited him in Lynchburg. "He introduced himself to me for I should have no more known him than the greatest stranger in the world—" Elijah tried to persuade his brother to stay in Virginia for in Ohio "his opportunities for Books was so bad that Calvin . . . had read thro one Book eighteen times—" Although Calvin returned to Ohio he remained in close touch with Elijah through a frequent exchange of letters.

Elijah and Maria's long-delayed family was started in 1821 with the birth of Sidney. During the next ten years he was followed by a brother, Lucian, and three sisters.



Elijah in spite of his former sentiments about children, in 1825 told his father with a bit of pride of the birth of the third child: ". . . so you may expect that I shall have a large Family yet and extend and perpetuate your name in this distant country for you—" Later he had to write that the baby, Laura, had died at the age of five months. In 1828 came another daughter—named Indiana in honor of brother Calvin's state, according to family tradition—and she was followed by Elizabeth. Brother Timothy Fletcher completed the household. Elijah told his father that he and Tim "lived together in great harmony . . . and had been much comfort to each other—"

As his family grew, the place of Elijah grew in the community of Lynchburg. His counsel and aid were variously called upon. Young men asked him for loans to see them through college; new organizations enlisted his judgment and financial help. He worked on committees for Lynchburg's first Episcopal church, for a textile mill, for the financing of the water works; he helped plan for the visit of Henry Clay.

In 1825 he described some of his other activities: "I have a plantation settled with negroes and overseer and cultivate Tobacco—wheat etc—This plantation is more than 20 miles off. I have five other tracts of Land which I rent out—I got this property cheap had to take some of it in payment of debts—as this country has been very much embarrassed—and money has been very scarce—I own another species of Property at which you will be somewhat surprised—I own a *printing establishment*—called The Virginian. This was the first paper that advocated Mr. Adams in this State and had such influence as to make Adams very popular in this part of the State It has a large circulation and is a profitable establishment—"

Elijah was elected mayor of Lynchburg in 1830 and again in 1832. One of his moves as mayor was to call a public meeting for the consideration of plans for a rail-

road and the Lynchburg and New River Railroad resulted from this step.

The accomplishments of Elijah Fletcher were publicly recognized in a book published in 1854, "Portraits and Memoirs of Eminent Americans," by John Livingston, a New York lawyer. Mr. Livingston attributed to him outstanding service to his adopted state in the realm of agriculture:

"Mr. Fletcher began to teach practically how easy it was to resuscitate these worn-out lands, and restore them to their natural fertility. He introduced deep plowing, drained the wet land, leveled the gullies and ravines which the washing rains had been so long forming and deepening in a soil which was destitute of sod or vegetable matter to keep it together, and to sow clover. . . .

"Mr. F . . . began to import the best improved breeds of cattle, sheep, and hogs, paying no attention to the fine blooded race-horse which had been the only animal of cost and care in the country. His early efforts in agricultural pursuits were looked upon by many as the visionary theory of a book farmer, but the practical results were so striking that all who saw were convinced, and one after another of his neighbors began to follow his example, and a general spirit of improvement was infused which has produced favorable changes in this part of the country. . . ."

He adds, "In a private way his benevolence is equal to any one. . . . He is ever active to aid in the building of churches and schools, giving land and money freely for these purposes, and being foremost in helping to construct roads, or aid in any other improvements in his neighborhood."

In the midst of his public activities Elijah did not neglect the education of his own children. Sidney and Lucian were sent to Yale, where the former was graduated in 1841. Indiana at thirteen was taken to Washington, to the Georgetown Visitation Convent, by her father. On his return to Lynchburg he wrote her a touching letter of



encouragement: "... you know how anxious your Brothers are that you should be a Learned and accomplished Lady—Cheer up—Do not despond. . . . Betty . . . started into school with Mr. Oliphant. . . . She has long parsing lessons which I help her get at night—has not got but one Zero yet and says she intends to study hard and be a fine scholar—” He ends with a postscript: “It will not hurt you to get up early and attend Mass or Morning Prayers . . . get up at 4 o clock—As soon as you learn Latin well you will understand their Prayers—”

Indiana stayed two years at the Georgetown convent. Perhaps Elijah and Maria were present and proud at the closing exercises of 1843 when their daughter was one of the two on whom were conferred “Academic Honors” and was the recipient of first prizes in oil painting and tapestry; second prizes in chemistry, philosophy and harp; third prize in history, botany and astronomy; and a “ticket of merit” in bookkeeping.

Indiana spent a year after that on the pleasant bank of the Delaware River at Bishop Doane’s School in Burlington, New Jersey—now known as St. Mary’s Hall—while Elizabeth was at the Georgetown convent. Then the two girls, chaperoned by brother Sidney, departed for France to “finish” their education at an international level. Sidney continued his studies in medicine and the girls concentrated on languages and music.

Mrs. John M. Payne, the friend who took charge at Sweet Briar House after Indiana’s death, had known her well in Lynchburg. She enlivened a Founders’ Day at Sweet Briar in 1925 with her recollections of the Fletchers. She related that the Fletchers went to Paris by way of London where a harp was bought for Indiana for \$1,000, the selfsame harp that stands today in Sweet Briar House. It was shipped to Paris and there she studied in earnest. She once told the Paynes that she could play a thousand pages of classical music without notes.

When the three left Paris they traveled extensively. Elizabeth, in an almost microscopic yet beautifully legible

hand, wrote long letters about these travels to “Ma and Pa.” They sailed from Trieste and visited Greece, Syria, Egypt (sailing up the Nile to the pyramids and Sphynx), Malta, Italy (“four quiet and tranquil months in Florence”), southern France, Spain (where ladies “have a great deal of vivacity in conversation but . . . are said to be rather indolent in private”). When they returned to Paris Elizabeth urged “Ma” to “come out and spend your money according to your tastes,” assuring her that there were a great many more things to buy there than in Lynchburg.

In the midst of this heavy exposure to culture a letter arrived from Elijah. He willingly endorsed this grand tour of his children but he wanted no high-flown ways from them. He reminded them, “When you come home the people will not estimate you by your finery—they will expect from you intelligence and mental adornment and not external show—They have all read that you rode on Mules and Donkeys . . . in your travels—and will think you can do the same here—”

The news from home which he passed on to them related chiefly to crops and prices. The diversity of his own interests is further revealed in mention of one of his projects: silk culture. He wrote, “I believe Bettie claims the Mulberry Farm as one of her Estates and,” he admonishes his fifteen-year-old daughter, “she must study out some plan to improve it and make it valuable.”

He also spoke of plans for improving “our rural establishment.”

Elizabeth had instructed her mother in one letter to “have windows overlooking the garden built with a balcony for me. It will be a delightful place to study there for when I return I shall have to commence Arithmetic again for I am afraid that I shall not know [how] to keep the account of my poultry. . . .”

This was the time that the house on the Sweet Briar plantation was being renovated and enlarged. Elijah had



owned this estate since 1825 or thereabouts and at last he decided to move to the country and devote himself to "pursuits more congenial to his feelings than the heartless politics of the day," as he wrote in farewell to his readers when he sold *The Virginian* in November 1841.

This Amherst County estate had grown from a nucleus of about three hundred acres, granted by the Crown in 1770 to one George Carrington. Various tracts had been added to it to bring it up to some three thousand acres by the time Elijah took possession. To Maria is attributed the naming of the plantation when on her first visit she delighted in the profusion of sweetbriar roses blooming there.

Elijah found it "an interesting place . . . and I have no wandering notions and never shall be induced to leave it—I have picked out my final resting place on the round top of Woodroofs Mound [One parcel of the plantation had been owned by a family named Woodroof or Woodruff]. . . . I want an area enclosed and a plain White marble obelisk 20 feet high—And this enclosure I would like cultivated in fine Trees and shrubs and flowers and that all my children should meet there once a year and prune and trim and cultivate it—"

The six-room farmhouse was changed by Elijah in 1851 into a large dwelling, unusual for the neighborhood, flanked by Italian towers which were connected by upper and lower arched galleries. The tower windows' wrought iron balconies may have been placed in answer to Elizabeth's request.

The garden bears eloquent testimony to Elijah's particular love for the most enduring of nature's growing gifts: trees. Elijah's magnificent trees are now well into their second century and their variety and quality constitute a handsome memorial to him. One of the residents of Sweet Briar House who came long after Elijah, Miss Meta Glass, third president of the college, has written warmly of the home which she appreciated for some twenty years, almost as long as Elijah himself: "There

are Norway spruces, cathedral yews, southern magnolias, weeping and branching hemlocks, horse chestnuts, maples, locusts with their fragrant white clusters in June, to be followed later in the summer by the white flowering catalpa, and the delicate mimosa. A holly rises almost to the height of the spruces, while the feathery shower-bouquets of a fringe tree stand delicately revealed against a boxwood hedge. . . . There has been preserved one of the original cabins of the slaves, standing in front of a stately Indian deodar and overhung by a paulownia tree that showers its pale purple blossoms about the door or blossomless, casts its dappled shadows against the old stone chimney."

Directly in front of the house a circle of thirty boxwoods embraces the only unbroken grassy plot, and a hedge of box some twelve feet high bounds the entire area of side lawns and flower gardens. The extent and variety of flowers vary from era to era but the trees, especially the free standing box trees, of which there are well over three hundred, are the unchanging and truly notable feature of the garden. They constitute one of the finest stands of box in the world today.

Miss Glass's comment on Sweet Briar House accommodates itself well to the memory of those who have loved it: "She is rather a noble house and a friendly house. She has gathered her gardens about her in a satisfying and an inviting way. . . . He would be a bold and indifferent one who did not agree to its beauty and charm."

The Fletcher children returned from Europe to two homes and, according to Mrs. Payne, the girls "divided their time between Lynchburg and Sweet Briar. They used to make the trip in a coach which required four white horses to draw them and their maids and luggage over the bad roads." Mrs. Payne stated that "they were much entertained and were considered very accomplished musicians. Miss Indiana was a brilliant performer on the harp; Miss Bettie a fine pianist."



It was perhaps at this time that Indiana met John Collins, the nephew of Mr. Dabney who lived across the street from the Fletchers in Lynchburg. He was a sea-faring man who won the affections of Indie, as she was frequently called, and on one of his visits to Lynchburg secured her promise to marry him. Their plans, however, were never to be realized. On a return trip from Europe John contracted smallpox at sea and died shortly after the ship reached New York. His bereft fiancée drew what comfort she could from a portrait of him which she had had copied from one owned by the Dabneys.

By the fall of 1847 Elijah reported to his brother Calvin that the family was in residence at Sweet Briar. He proclaimed that he himself had withdrawn "from the publick turmoil of the times [and found] the retired society of my daughters . . . very interesting to me. . . . They care but little about the foolish society of the world. . . . I dwell upon this . . . because it was predicted that after seeing and traveling so much they would not be content with the monotonous retirement of this country."

Indie and Betty did move about, however. They paid a visit or two to Vermont and planned a ten-day trip by carriage into West Virginia to accompany their father on an inspection tour of some of his property that he had never seen. And their father busied himself with various things. He had occasion to write Calvin, "You will hardly guess what I am amusing myself about today . . . setting out trees of various kinds when from my age [he was fifty-nine] there can be little chance of seeing their growth to maturity or enjoying their fruits . . . as Mr. Gerrard said Plant a tree today if I knew Death would await me tomorrow."

In 1849 Sidney, whom his father characterized as "a very industrious, managing Fellow" and Lucian, who seemed "not of much account and probably never will be," set out for California to seek their fortunes in the gold fields. Sidney cut across Panama but Lucian went around the Horn. In less than a year Sidney was back—without a

fortune; he had "endured much hardship, seen much of the world, and returned better contented," his father thought, "with a comfortable home." Perhaps it was soon after this that Sidney began to run Tusculum, the plantation at New Glasgow, which eventually came to him.

Lucian returned later. Concerning Lucian there are more stories and less history than about any of the Fletcher children. Lucian went into a distant land and squandered his substance.

For some time after 1850 there is little information about the Sweet Briar family. Several letters are preserved which arrived from friends whom Indie had made either in school or on her travels. One Mary Hüffner wrote gay warm letters, often in French, on elegant stationery with an embossed monogram. Another friend who signed herself "Lizzie" wrote newsy friendly letters. Both of these correspondents make references which indicate that the Fletcher girls diverted themselves every now and then with trips to New York or to watering places.

Maria enjoyed the more lively life of Lynchburg and spent a great deal of time at their house there. Nevertheless, when she died of a fever after a ten days' illness in September of 1853 the family felt her loss keenly.

On February 15, 1858, Sidney wrote an important letter to his uncle, Calvin. He tells of his father's returning from a business trip to Lynchburg on a cold, stormy day: "He had not proceeded on his way more than a mile or two when he was taken with a congestion of the stomach. . . . He stopped at a farm house & received every attention that kindness and medical skill could administer. Indy and I hastened to his bedside as soon as the news reached us." After two days they brought him home to Sweet Briar where he recovered satisfactorily until the morning of February 13 when he was shaving. "He had nearly done when my sister was attracted by a singular noise, approached him, called him—received his head in her arms



—and his spirit winged its way without a groan to the happy land of good and just men.”

Indiana and Elizabeth inherited from their father the Sweet Briar plantation and sixty-seven slaves with their numerous children. Sidney, who was named executor, received the only specific bequest, “the old tankard dish.” Lucian was not mentioned.

About a year after her father’s death Betty married William Hamilton Mosby of Lynchburg and they lived with Indie at Sweet Briar. Concerning this arrangement Indie received from her uncle, William S. Crawford of Washington, kindly and discreet advice: “I should deem it very desirable . . . that the pecuniary interests of you and Betty should be severed as far as practicable. . . . One or the other should purchase out the entire estate.” Perhaps it was due to this counsel that Indie emerged as mistress of Sweet Briar and Betty acquired an adjoining tract where the Mosbys later built their home, Mount St. Angelo.

The rumble of war made itself heard distantly and not very alarmingly in a letter from Indie’s friend Lizzie who, on January 5, 1861, wrote, “Your lace flounces at this moment adorn my New Year’s dress, where they were transferred after having ornamented Cordelia’s at the ball. We are only waiting for the word from you to send them home. . . . I hope you may be able to pass a part of the winter with us, for I can’t believe that my countrymen are so insane as to break up in a passion the glorious Union which seemed so firmly established . . . I think this whole disturbance is the work of designing politicians. . . . Our Friday evening receptions begin this week. How we shall miss you and your harp!”

It was a long time before Indie and her harp got back to New York. What the war years were like at Sweet Briar can only be guessed. Uncle Timothy sided with the north and went back to Ludlow to take over the farm which he ran until his death in 1870. Uncle Calvin’s son William fought for the north, was taken prisoner and released from Libby Prison during an exchange. His feelings, it seemed,

were not too partisan for him to accept an invitation to Sweet Briar to recuperate.

A Yankee soldier took occasion, when letters from southern wounded were going out to their families, to write Indie from Sharpsburg that her friends in the north were well and that her letter to Lizzie had been received. Another note, from a man in Lynchburg, expressed regret that he could not get a still for Miss Fletcher but assured her that if she beat her apples into cider “and let it stand it will not interfere with the quality of the brandy.” And in 1865 one of her Crawford cousins in Richmond ruefully wrote her that a bushel of her apples in Richmond at that time would bring a hundred dollars.

In 1865 Indiana was thirty-seven years old. She owned a great deal of land but had no labor to work it. Her parents were dead, her brothers and sister were elsewhere. She had been isolated for four or five years on her plantation.

Then a visitor arrived from the north.

He was a red-headed Irishman, brought early in life to this country. He had been graduated from Trinity College at Hartford, Connecticut, where he remained to earn a master’s degree, and left there wearing a Phi Beta Kappa key. Then he turned to the church and in 1858 graduated from General Theological Seminary, New York City. The Misses Fletcher preserved an invitation to the commencement exercises, but where and how they met him is not known. Afterwards he spent six years at Zion Church in Dobbs Ferry, New York, and during that time he had not forgotten Indiana Fletcher. In fact, it is a real tribute to her attractions that this gentleman, whose name was James Henry Williams, should have been able to overcome the difficulties of travel prevailing at that time and have made his way to Virginia in August 1865 when, said Mrs. Payne, “he appeared at Sweet Briar, greatly to the surprise of the lady.”



It was a wholly acceptable surprise. The lady did not vacillate. She married him at St. Paul's Church in Lynchburg on August 23, early in the morning so that they could catch the train for New York.

In the middle of the twentieth century some child psychologists confidently tell us that all children need to "create a hubbub, get into arguments and have them settled, learn to give and take in a group. . . ." Some day this advice may appear dated but just now it seems so true to us that it is hard not to feel a little sorry for the daughter who was born to Indiana and Henry two years after their wedding. She was to be their only child and was destined to live a life almost entirely hubbub-less.

For her parents, however, life could have been nothing but joyful when, on a morning in September, the stillness of the sun-drenched box garden at Sweet Briar was broken by the first cry of little Maria. At least "Maria" was the name entered in the family Bible to record the event, but she was always called "Daisy."

From a parent's point of view she was a thoroughly gratifying little girl in every way. If Daisy was docile, sweet and dutiful, she was not prissy and she had friends who were fond of her. Her only contemporaries at Sweet Briar were children of former slaves and occasional visitors from neighboring farms to whom she played a gracious hostess without being patronizing.

Her best playmate, Signora Hollins, arrived when both little girls were around seven years old and Signora came with her aunt who was to be the Williams's cook. Signora lived until the summer of 1954 and she had many memories of "the olden days" at Sweet Briar. When she came, she said there were thick woods everywhere except for the garden and the landscaped grounds immediately surrounding Sweet Briar House. An iron gate at the entrance into the grounds was guarded by a dog so fierce that he had to be caged whenever visitors came, which was not often.

In this remote place the little black girl and the very blonde Daisy used to explore the edge of the woods and pretend to fish in the spring at the bottom of the dell. Occasionally they would be joined by two little girls from the Caperton farm and there would be picnics on the grass under the shady trees around the spring. The Capertons remembered Daisy's wonderful toys and how generous she was with them. They would play "dress-ups" and give plays at which Mr. and Mrs. Williams were willing spectators. And Daisy liked to play her harp or the piano. Her favorite piece for a long time was "A Maiden's Prayer." Her small guests were impressed with her sweet disposition and they heard grown-ups say that she was "a child in this world, but not of the world."

Even the regular trips to New York which began at an early age failed to varnish her with urban pretensions. Her enrollment in a girls' school in the city and frequent attendance at theater and concert never diminished her interest in what was going on at Sweet Briar nor kept her from being glad to go back to it. Her warmest enthusiasms were all on the rural side. In the diary she kept during her fourteenth year the most detailed observations refer to affairs on the plantation. She loved flowers, knew their names, planted and tended them; noted the welfare and disposition of livestock; made mention of fruits as they ripened throughout the summer—tamarind, cherries and strawberries, currants and raspberries, murillo cherries (someone stole the whole crop that year), huckleberries, June apples, gooseberries, cat head apples, peaches, watermelons, belle flower apples, pears, damsons and musk melons.

She was interested in prices and figures ("I weigh 90. Mamma 182. Papa 137"). Whenever the harp went to or from New York she faithfully set down the express charges, which were never twice the same. She reveals that discrimination against the south which has more than once caused bitterness when she writes "The express on the harp [from



New York was] . . . five dollars (\$5.00) [but] when we went to New York it was \$10.60." Mild Daisy did not editorialize with even an exclamation mark, but she did observe the discrepancy.

One of the early entries in the diary gives details of a trip to New York, the more exciting because the departure was delayed two days due to a deep snowfall: January 7, 1882, "We got up at three o'clock and put on the kettle in our own room to make the coffee we ate some chicken, and bread and butter, in the tearoom, we left the dishes on the table without washing them, We put out the fire with snow and started at half past four, the carriage came right up to the steps. Mamma slipped getting in the carriage. Meally warmed some bricks which kept our feet warm in the carriage. It was a long disagreeable ride which I will never forget the snow was very deep the moon shone part of the time the wagon went in front we took five trunks We reached the depot for the 6.25 train. The Harp went yesterday. . . . We traveled all day I did not eat anything. We reached New York quarter to ten took a private carriage to the Fifth Avenue Hotel and had supper."

In New York Daisy's best friend was Helena Mallory whose father was professor of English at Trinity College. Although she was three years Daisy's junior, Helena was so close to the family that she lived with the Williamses at one time and the two girls went together to Miss Haines' School in Gramercy Square. In 1934 Helena, by then Mrs. Mellersh of London, wrote of Daisy with warm memories: she was "always very pale, had a very sweet expression, China blue eyes and was most lovable." In telling of going with the Williamses to see "Pinafore" she said confidently, "Daisy . . . the poor dear [was] well muffled up in woollen scarves. She would not have been treated like a hot house plant in these days, and might still be alive." (Mrs. Mellersh herself lived until 1945.)

There are references in the diary to Helena but without the least evaluation. In fact, the recital of Daisy's round

of activities in New York is no more punctuated with likes or dislikes, or with excitement or boredom than her sentences are punctuated with periods or capitals. The classes in English, French, algebra, history, astronomy, geography are mentioned; presents at Christmas are listed; lessons on harp and piano conscientiously recorded—all with no emotion. Even the many trips to the dentist's are set down with a curiously unfeeling tone: "I took gas and had four teeth pulled out in two minutes, then took a walk." She went "to see Barnums Circus to see Jumbo the elephant he is not very large." The plays and concerts were "very pleasant" and some they "enjoyed very much." The only hint of an event of national importance is the laconic entry on January 26: "Guitteau the President's assassin was sentenced to be hung."

Daisy's writing understandably acquired a new degree of revelation and interest when she wrote to someone, as she had occasion to do shortly after the diary was filled. At the first of May 1883 Daisy went with her ailing father back to the quiet of Sweet Briar while her mother remained in New York on business. In her daily letters to a most appreciative reader Daisy emerges as a girl of humor, affection and responsibility.

She shows a real enjoyment of some of her studies, which she is continuing by herself. She passes a few French idioms and German phrases along to her mother: "Wohlrriechend Feldrose—sweet briar; literally, sweet-scented field rose." She takes real satisfaction in her harp and practices every day. There are comments on wages for the help and how she dealt with the contrary Sarah who speaks impudently and on the things she had to cope with in the round of daily living: "the back of stove burned out" and it was necessary to "get the piece caste in town"; the piano tuner failed to arrive when they met his train and had dinner ready and waiting for him; the Scotsman who came to shear the sheep had to be put up in the "office," the cottage to the east of Sweet Briar House.



Her expressions of loneliness and especially her dread of the long, hot, empty Sundays are always tempered with patience and an understanding that the situation is difficult for her mother too. Even the fear during her father's illness never brings the urgent and direct plea for her mother's return which seems to have been justifiable.

Daisy gives her mother a vivid little picture of the return to the country: Uncle Sing (her name for Sidney) got on the train at New Glasgow and rode the last few miles with them. Then they passed "Aunt Lil [she called her Aunt Elizabeth 'Lilybell' or 'Lil'] . . . at the bottom of her garden waving her handkerchief with her head wrapped in a white and black worsted thing and the little shawl on. All the Lavenders were out too, near the track. Logan met us at the depot of course. . . ." And Aunt Lil "sent Albert over with a great big pat of butter and some bread which she said she had baked fresh for us (Martha saw Givy bring it from Lynchburg in the morning). . . ." Next day she says it is a good thing they brought bread with them in the trunk for Aunt Lilybell's was sour.

Daisy went over on Sunday to see her aunt and "took her the candy, she did not say 'thank you' of course. . . . [I] caught Lil in the window of her room *knitting*, although Sunday, she exclaimed Oh! Ah! etc. and asked me in . . . to the sitting room." They talked of Daisy's studies and Daisy told "about Mme. Silva's school, and how plain it was and she [Aunt Lil] said that, 'the breeding of girls was the same when she was young,' an elegant expression. She said I had improved some in Italian, and that it was as easy to learn as A. B. C., mere nothing, and that every ordinary educated person knew French and Italian as well as English, German too for that matter, so I must try and get a common education, but I must say I do not find it as easy as A. B. C. . . ."

Poor Aunt Lilybell! Life had not been kind to her and she was unable to come to terms with it honestly. She talked as if her circumstances were as grand as she had hoped them to be. When she and Mr. Mosby first moved

to her estate they lived, patiently enough, in the overseer's cabin while they warmed themselves with dreams of the home to be built. It was to be an English manor and they would call it "Hamlet Hall." But a trip to Europe diverted their architectural preferences to Italy and on their return they built a villa—or something like a villa—and called it Mount St. Angelo. There were Roman arches over the windows and a three-story tower rising above the two ample stories of the main house. If the house was not entirely satisfying esthetically, at least the planting around it showed plainly what all Fletchers appreciated—trees and shrubs, of which more than seventy varieties have been counted in St. Angelo's garden. Eighty years after the Mosbys moved there, there were still "magnolias, pink dogwood, pink horse chestnut, crape myrtle—besides the deodar, the cedar of Lebanon, dead these several years but clothed in a mantle of vines, the huge copper beech with its trunk like an elephant's hide, the spruce that towers above it with branches sweeping the ground, mahonias, quantities of rare evergreens, tree box and dwarf box."

Before the plans for the estate were fulfilled Aunt Lil's money had run out and her husband had died; she lived on in her own dreams of the life that had not materialized. At the time of her death the plastering in the house was still not finished; the Catholic sisters in Lynchburg to whom the home had been willed, graciously declined it and Uncle Sing inherited it.

In spite of the irritating effects of Aunt Lil, most especially when she would ask for a piece on the piano then refuse to comment when Daisy had finished, Daisy visited her frequently, partly from her own boredom, partly from sympathy for her aunt's loneliness. The single truly sincere statement of Elizabeth's quoted in one of Daisy's letters to her mother discloses an unlooked-for depth of affection and grief: "She said that you were without doubt the light and life of our family, and when she came [over here] . . .



the house and all reminded her of a tomb, so lonesome and forlorn. . . ." Even Daisy, who did not share Elizabeth's memories of the happy time when her parents presided over the house and ran a small village of slaves, added ". . . and that is about true."

All during that month of May Mr. Williams languished. Stirabouts, lager beer, and "Dr. Beldens medicine" failed to help him. Daisy had "to persecute him a good deal to take some oatmeal and milk." By the end of May "Papa could only take two or three mouthfulls of anything, he says he is fast going, and will soon leave us. He has not been out to day nor eaten anything, has been lying down in a half sleep. He can hardly speak, had you not better come home?" Until then she had quoted her aunt and uncle without stating her own anxious feelings, but now at last Daisy tentatively raises the wistful question herself: ". . . had you not better come home?"

She had been sent to the large lonely house with a sick man. She had seen her duty to cheer him, keep the house running, and keep her mother in close touch. As she said in one of the letters, "I suppose we are doing our duty and will always feel better for having done so." She had done all she could and now she permitted herself a call for help.

So Indiana came. She stayed for seven weeks and did indeed prove herself to be "the light and life of the family." When she left, Henry was well enough to ride in to Lynchburg on his horse and collect the rents from Diamond Hill, and Daisy had a new interest in her German lessons with a Mr. Kent in the neighborhood. Even though she liked the phrases and proverbs, she found "the German exercises . . . hard and long." She would not give them up even though "Aunt Lil and Uncle Sing say I ought to stop studying German, that it will bring on a serious illness, and that I do not look well, and all that; but I do not think so." She said she had "got to those dreadful verbs, that you split in pieces, the last part has to fit in some where at the beginning and the first some where at the end and I never fit them in where they belong, I have

never liked puzzles and the verbs are just like them, but I suppose it is easy when you get accustomed to it."

Time did not hold out long enough for her to "get accustomed to it," however. The following January the three Williamses returned to New York and shortly after their arrival illness struck the family again. This time it was Daisy. She had pneumonia and within a few days she was dead.

Indiana never recovered from this crushing loss. The fragmentary history of the remainder of her life is dotted with attempts at consolation—a sincere and earnest letter of comfort from Rebecca Voorhies of Amherst, gentle and wryly humorous notes from brother Sid, a few letters from Henry which reveal a depth of feeling and a capacity for emotion one would not guess from the picture of the ailing man in Daisy's letters.

Henry has been overshadowed by the Fletchers, perhaps mainly from the accidental and negative fact that there are few written references to him. After his marriage the bishop of his diocese sent a cordial note of congratulation and regret that he was leaving the diocese, and offered to find a place for him should he ever wish it. But Henry never functioned again as a clergyman. For twenty years being Indie's husband seems to have been his chief occupation. There are bills for sales of his stocks worth up to \$40,000 which tend to bear out Mrs. Payne's belief that he was a man "of considerable wealth."

People of Amherst have said kind words concerning his good works immediately after the Civil War. Southern sympathizers were not permitted to hold elective office so he, a northerner, became county clerk and then "turned over his duties to southern deputies whom he appointed to carry on the county business." Mrs. Payne also credits him with representing the people of Amherst at that time at the convention for framing a new state constitution. She says that "he took a very conservative stand and assisted materially the white people of Virginia."

Eventually Henry emerges from the sparse records which



refer to him as the operator of a small hotel in New York at 260 Fourth Avenue. From here he wrote Indie at Sweet Briar in June 1888 that "the year has been very successful financially" and indicated that the place was closing for the summer. A woman of Lynchburg who remembers him as "a silent host" might be amused to see in one of his letters how voluble were his complaints against an employee of his hotel whom he had to dismiss.

In the same letter he reveals an even more passionate nature on a sorrowful subject: vandals, presumably from Amherst, had broken the wings from the marble angel which guarded Daisy's grave. "How sad a year! in the pitiless cruelty of the merciless wound! it has left to rankle in our souls forever!!—O fiendish war, of worse than bruits, on helpless innocence, resting in the sweet pure sleep of holiness, in her early bed, on that lovely hill top, with quilt of green grass and sweet flowers tucked in about her, with loves own hands, and watered with the tears of bruised and bleeding hearts;—O what an act of sacrilegious impiety! What a fiendish mad and dastardly onslaught! on all, that poor human nature even at its worst, holds sacred; desecrating the grave of a spotless child!—a maiden so young!—taken so early and from so much!—and done in such wanton wickedness!!!—The sullen thud of that blow tells, of the crashing in of Satan's clinched fist between the eyes of God, in the face of heaven: and will reverberate through the Universe forever.—I have no liking for such demon deeds done in darkness, nor for the doers of them, and that is the reason I never propose to visit Amherst again."

Before another year had passed Henry too had been laid to rest in the family burying-plot on the hill at Sweet Briar. To his wife, Indiana, he left his whole property and estate, the size of which is not known. He also expressed a wish that a school might be established at Sweet Briar but, he added, "this is not a binding direction."

Indie had to live out eleven dark years more or less

alone. From New York, where she had been winding up Henry's business, she wrote to Elizabeth, "I have by remaining here with my own exertion, liquidated a huge rental debt. . . . I have been nowhere this winter except to church and I know nothing whatever of the outside world. . . . I am grieved to hear that Sid seems not so well, but Oh what a lonely, forsaken place Amherst is! I always thought it a beautiful spot to die at—but not to live; his life has been centered there and the desolation and decadence of the country reflects on him as upon us all."

Sidney lived nine years more. In 1898, shortly after he came into possession of St. Angelo, he was making a tour of inspection of the house, was seized suddenly, staggered to a bed and toppled over dead. Sidney left Tusculum to his relative John J. Williams, who was a descendant of Lucy Fletcher, \$1,000 each to two of his cousins, and his silverware to another cousin. The "rest, residue and remainder" went to Indie who was also named executrix.

Indie now had an extensive estate—and no obvious heirs. In 1893 she had revised her will and received from her lawyer his hope that "the execution of this will will lift the burden from your mind and aid your speedy recovery of health."

The most that anyone knew of the contents of the will was Indie's not-very-revealing statement to Mrs. Payne explaining why she did not respond to the many requests for money which she received: "I have my reasons for not letting it go in a hundred different directions." And towards the end of her life she engaged in a frenzy of strange collecting which caused people to talk and wonder. Whenever there was a sale in Lynchburg she bought up lengths of materials—so many that in an inventory of her effects printed after her death ten pages in fine type were required to list the yard-goods alone. There were other items in quantity: 170 lace curtains, 108 pairs of new stockings, 52 new dress skirts, 473 towels, 308 napkins, 234 pillow slips, 68 carving knives, 64 carving forks and 20 steels.



The wish expressed by Henry Williams that Sweet Briar might become a school gave basis for speculation. In fact, there is even an inkling that Elijah had talked in the days before the Civil War of such a possibility. Rumors flew thick and fast—a home for orphans, a domestic science school (else why the numerous carving sets?), a home for indigent women of Amherst County, an Episcopal school for girls—these were some of the surmises.

So Mrs. Farrar was not alone in wondering what was to become of Sweet Briar. All those who were in Sweet Briar House on the night of Indiana's death were extremely curious to know where the will was and what it would tell them. They looked through the desk and in every likely place but it could not be found.

Henry Williams' sister, Mrs. Emma McCall, had been notified in New York of Indie's death and next morning in preparation for her arrival, Mrs. Payne and Eliza were readying a room. Eliza opened the linen press in Daisy's room to get fresh sheets and a small wicker basket rolled out; as it hit the floor the lid fell back and an envelope slipped out. Eliza picked it up and read "Last will and testament of Indiana Fletcher Williams."

With bated breath she carried it into the next room where four or five people were talking in respectfully subdued tones. She handed it to the Reverend Mr. Gray who carefully unfolded it and read it aloud.

Emma McCall was to find that her trip down would be made worthwhile by the bequest of all Indie's possessions in West Virginia. She was also to have Indie's own painting of the Bay of Naples and her "bronze group." The next largest legacy was to the manager of the plantation, Mr. Stephen Harding, who received \$5,000, and there were a few other legacies. Mount St. Angelo was to go to her cousin Mary Lee Page of Richmond to be used by her for her lifetime, then it was to revert to the bulk of the estate which in memory of Daisy was to be turned into a school for girls.

CHAPTER II

*Plantation  
into College*

1900-1906

INDIANA FLETCHER WILLIAMS departed this life on that crisp autumn evening, leaving only the essential directive to those who were to carry on:

"Procure the incorporation . . . of 'Sweet Briar institute,' . . . for the object . . . of establishing . . . a school or seminary for the education of white girls and young women. . . . It shall be the general scope and object of the school to impart to its students such education in sound learning, and such physical, moral and religious training as shall, in the judgment of the directors, best fit them to be useful members of society."

A school to educate girls to be useful members of society—this is the substance of the wish that was set down on paper. The only other specific statements are a "desire that the school shall be made self-supporting, so far as practicable" and a "hope that the board of directors may . . . establish scholarships . . . for a limited number of deserving students."

The bequest was not unlike a dry and shriveled seed, left in rich earth. Great quantities of nourishment, cultivation and uninterrupted care and effort must work upon the seed before the specimen plant is to flourish. The precise way in which seeds grow is conditioned by those who tend them, and Miss Indie had invited such influences from others. Her central wish was unembellished by conditions or limitations. She had shown forbearance in removing herself from the deliberations and preparations which



must follow, knowing perhaps that free discussion and unbiased consideration would have been impossible in meetings where the donor herself sat.

Indiana had left the germ of an idea well encased in the resources her father had accumulated and which she herself had tended well. Now it was time for others to act and, for years to come, many labored long and earnestly to bring the idea into fact.

It might be thought that after the creation of a "corporation and body politic," the establishment of the school might go forward fairly smoothly, but mountainous obstacles arose at once, even before the corporation could be formed. As early as December 14, 1900, the *Lynchburg News* had published a suggestion that the will of Mrs. Indiana Fletcher Williams might be contested. Her brother Lucian's surviving children were putting their heads together. There were five of them, and, in spite of the fact that Elijah had not mentioned the name of Lucian in his will, they felt that they could substantiate claims to the handsome estate which they saw being diverted forever from the Fletcher family.

On January 15, 1901, the *News* reported that the court was being asked to construe the will "and in doing this the terms of the document may be considerably altered. . . . If the decision be against the said heirs, an independent suit may be instituted by them. From present appearance, it does not look as if litigation over the estate will come to an end at any time in the very near future."

Nevertheless, by January 24 the *News* could report that a bill of incorporation was going to be introduced into the legislature at Richmond by a senator named Carter Glass and that the bill would "be contested before the legislature; counsel representing the persons who claim to be heirs are in Richmond and it is understood will oppose the granting of the charter."

On January 28 opposition arose from yet another quarter. Authorities of Amherst County turned up in

Richmond, vigorously resisting the founding of the school according to the terms of the will "on the ground that it will release from taxation nearly 6,000 acres of land in the county, holdings of educational institutions being exempt from taxation. . . . The Amherst authorities contend that the trustees should be required to sell all land not embraced in Green Brier [*sic*] itself, which contains 2,600 acres."

Other bad news appeared on the lovely horizon surrounding the plantation: the State of Virginia and the County of Amherst claimed \$31,000 due in back taxes on the Williams estate. Was there to be a school or not? At that moment prospects for educating young women on the green hills of Sweet Briar did not look bright.

There was one cheering ray of light in that month of January. The *News* carried a headline: "Sweet Briar College May Be Recipient of Another Large Endowment." The Richmond correspondent of the *Baltimore Sun* was quoted as having "brought to light the facts that a New York lady, Mrs. Van Rensselaer, who was quite intimately acquainted with and probably slightly related to Mrs. Williams, contemplates giving the proposed Sweetbriar Seminary [*sic*] a rich endowment. What the amount will be is not known, but it is believed by those informed that it may equal, if it does not exceed, that bequeathed by Mrs. Williams. . . . It is expected that in a short time, certainly very early in the year, all arrangements will be made for accomplishing this end." "Those informed" were, alas! mistakenly informed. No communication ever arrived from Mrs. Van Rensselaer.

But the trustees of the Institute soon acted to make a real change in the dour tone of headlines in the *News* concerning Sweet Briar. On February 9, 1901, there is one reading, "The Sweet Briar Charter: A Compromise Under Which All Opposition Is Withdrawn." A special dispatch from Richmond bears the information that for \$25,000 the contestants of the will are abandoning litigation and that for \$30,000 the County of Amherst will consider its



tax bill paid in full and will not further contest the proposed plans for a school. By February 13, "the bill incorporating Sweetbriar Institute . . . is now a law."

Four trustees had ridden out together the storm in procuring the incorporation. Indiana Williams had chosen as her trustees her bishop, her rector, the rector of her family's church in Lynchburg, and her farm manager, the latter also to act as executor. They first came together on a winter's day in the lecture room of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Lynchburg. The three clergymen doubtless were already well acquainted with each other, and Mr. Harding, the farm manager, would have been known at least to the Reverend Mr. Gray, rector of Amherst's Ascension Church.

Bishop Alfred Magill Randolph was easily the dominant figure of the group. A native of Virginia, he had been rector of Christ Church in Alexandria, the elegant little church where George Washington worshipped. Before heading the diocese of Southern Virginia he had served as rector of Baltimore's Emmanuel Church. As a preacher the bishop was widely known and was ranked by many as second only to his good friend Phillips Brooks, who for his part declared that Bishop Randolph was best of all preachers.

As a man of character, warmth, wit, and—yes—absent-mindedness, he was well loved. In his absence of mind, he had once returned from a trip through his diocese with a silver toilet set in his suitcase. His wife, unpacking his bag, exclaimed delightedly over the pieces.

"Who gave you this *lovely* present?" she asked.

"*What* lovely present? Good heavens! they were on the bureau in my room in Dr. ———'s house where I stayed last night. I must have—!"

So the pieces had to be wrapped and returned with a warm note of episcopal explanation.

A story which the bishop enjoyed telling on himself concerned his visit to a revival conducted by an itinerant

evangelist in his town. Bishop Randolph sat well to the fore, the better to see and hear. When the preacher asked those who wanted to be saved to stand up, the bishop looked surreptitiously around to see if there were responses to the call. There were not. The evangelist next pointed a finger at the bishop and roared in an accusing voice, "Don't *you* want to go to heaven?" The bishop, who was a slight and spritely man, sat forward on the edge of his chair, fixed the man's eye, and firmly answered, "Not tonight, thank you."

Dr. Wallace Rollins, Sweet Briar's first chaplain and professor of religion, was an intimate friend of Bishop Randolph's and he wishes rather wistfully that the bishop had not done so many amusing things. "Those stories," he says, "are easy to remember and fun to tell. When he was alive, they furnished an added flavor to a well-known person but now the stories live on without his occasional presence to bear witness also to the deeper qualities of his character."

The weight of that character, however, was felt for the seventeen years he presided over the board of Sweet Briar College, and its importance in settling fundamental questions is not doubted by any who were acquainted with him.

Another of the trustees, the Reverend Mr. Theodore Carson, was rector of that St. Paul's Church where the trustees first met, the church which Elijah Fletcher had helped to build. Mr. Carson was an elderly man at the time of the founding of Sweet Briar and his death in 1902 cut short his service to the college. Members of the board recognized "his fidelity and his sacrifice of time . . . his hopeful view of the beneficent results to the great cause of education of women . . . by the opportunities we seek to afford them in Sweet Briar Institute." They perpetuated his name on campus in one of the first two dormitories to be erected, and his family still serves Sweet Briar: his granddaughter's husband, Bishop Beverley Dandridge Tucker, Jr., was on the board of directors for almost twenty years, serving as president from 1942 to 1949.



The Reverend Mr. Arthur Gray, the third trustee, had been superintendent of schools for Prince William County at one time, and at Miss Indie's death he was her rector at Ascension Church in Amherst. For more than twenty years he was a devoted friend of Sweet Briar. His neat and legible handwriting fills page upon page of the secretary's book, for he took minutes of every meeting of the board for twelve years before his failing health caused his presence to become sporadic. (Not the least of his job was to record every stock and security which Mrs. Williams had owned and occasionally to repeat the list showing changes in market value.)

He made a great contribution of another sort by frequently filling the pulpit on Sundays during the first years college was in session, when merely getting from Amherst to Sweet Briar was an achievement in itself. One early visitor had refused to call the approaches to the college "roads." "Roads? Rather I would call them obstacles to progress!" But Mr. Gray came on, through mud, through wet, through cold, in all kinds of weather, with an unflagging devotion. The first president remembered that "he rode off one Sunday without staying for dinner, with the rain coming down in torrents on him and his horse; he had to go to another service some miles away."

Aside from Mr. Gray's carefully and conscientiously written minutes, we cite a sample from his pen for those who would enjoy a metaphorical picture of Amherst County. Writing in a souvenir almanac of the Amherst County Committee he described the county in the language of the period as "the great Giantess sitting on the highest portion of central Virginia with her back against the Blue Ridge and her feet dabbling in the noble James."

When Mr. Gray resigned in 1921 he was voted an honorary membership on the board and "invited to attend, with his wife, all future meetings of the Board, at the expense of the Institute." In half a year, however, he was removed from all earthly invitations, even those of such warmheartedness.

Mr. Stephen R. Harding had been the able and ener-

getic manager of Sweet Briar Plantation before Mrs. Williams died. She chose him to continue serving her estate both as a trustee and as executor. She also left him the legacy of \$5,000 and to his daughter Daisy she left \$700. She may have tutored Daisy a bit, for several essays and lesson sheets bearing her name have been found among the Williams papers. Miss Indie thought well indeed of Mr. Harding and with his intimate knowledge of the plantation's needs he seemed to be a thoroughly fitting choice at the time the will was drawn.

When these four men first came together on January 14, 1901, the actions they took were typical of the combination of high purpose and earthy rural responsibility which Sweet Briar's governors have continually had to demonstrate. First, they solemnly resolved to accept the trust to inaugurate Sweet Briar Institute and to carry out the will to the best of their ability. Later, they authorized moneys to repair tenant houses and to cut down a dead locust tree in front of Sweet Briar House.

At their third and last meeting together as trustees, in March 1901, they followed the provisions of the will by electing three others to join them in forming the board of directors for the now properly incorporated institute. They chose Dr. John M. McBryde of Blacksburg, the Reverend Dr. Carl E. Grammer of Norfolk, and Judge Legh R. Watts of Portsmouth, Virginia.

To these seven now fell the task of turning words and banknotes into buildings, laboratories, books, roads, furniture, staff, and faculty. They were all engaged in full-time occupations, only one of them in the field of education.

The group proved, in one way and another, equal to the challenge. They had their talents and they gave generously of them. Judge Watts, who had been judge of the corporation court at Portsmouth, used his legal knowledge to advise the board. However, living in Portsmouth he was somewhat removed from the center of activities and more accessible counsel in Lynchburg had to be retained for the series of complex questions which continued to



arise. (William Bland Dew, the first treasurer, once wryly remarked that most of the young lawyers in Lynchburg at a certain period got their start in some of Sweet Briar's litigations.)

Dr. Grammer was deeply interested in education and, not surprisingly, in education for women as he had three daughters. A graduate of The Johns Hopkins University and the Protestant Episcopal Seminary in Virginia, he had been professor of church history in the latter for eleven years between charges in the churches he had served at Hancock, Maryland, Cincinnati, and Norfolk.

He worked long and devotedly for Sweet Briar, for thirty-two years as a member of the board and for seventeen years as its president. Two years before the college opened he was a member of the all-important committee on policy and curriculum; his interviews and judgment bore great weight in the selection of the first three presidents of the college; and he brought Mr. Fergus Reid onto the board. Mr. Reid, his vestryman at Christ Church, Norfolk, became one of the college's greatest friends and leaders, eventually succeeding Dr. Grammer as president of the board.

Dr. Grammer worked endlessly to raise some of the money which Mrs. Van Rensselaer's rumored endowment would have so pleasantly supplied. Without compensation he once labored an entire month seeking prospective students at a precarious moment when a few less on the rolls would have meant a deficit; he was credited with adding fifteen girls to the registration that year, and the budget was balanced. And then he sent his own daughters—Bessie, Dorothy, and Mary Page—to Sweet Briar. Living until 1944, he had the longest view of any of those who had known the college only as a charter on a sheet of paper.

Dr. McBryde, the seventh member, was the meteor who streaked across the skies in those hours before the dawn of September 1906 when the first student arrived. He was the vigorous, vivid and imaginative president of Virginia Polytechnic Institute, which he seemed capable of running

at the same time that he was in the vortex of activity in the planning and construction of Sweet Briar College.

At seventeen he had been an officer in the Confederate Army and later served two years in the Treasury Department of the Confederacy. At the close of the war he farmed in Virginia for fifteen years before deciding that education should be his career. At the University of Tennessee he was professor of botany and agriculture; at South Carolina College he taught botany and served also as president. From there he went to preside over the University of South Carolina and direct its Agricultural Experiment Stations. *Who's Who in America* of 1901-1902 ungrudgingly permitted its subjects to list positions of honor which they had declined to accept. In this category Dr. McBryde was able to mention the presidency of the University of Tennessee and a position as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture of the United States.

At the first meeting of the board Dr. McBryde was appointed to every committee. Bishop Randolph asked him and Judge Watts to receive the funds from Mr. Harding and place them in suitable safe deposit, which, as it turned out, was not a simple task.

The Bishop also asked him and Mr. Carson to select a suitable corporate seal, a project which was turned over to Dr. McBryde's son, John M. McBryde, Jr. He had already designed a seal for Hollins College and undertook with enthusiasm creating one for Sweet Briar. An unusually beautiful and meaningful design was evolved, uniting on an ogive shield—a favored shape for the coat of arms for women and ecclesiasts—devices symbolic of the state, the county, the Fletcher family, and the college. Its designer has described it thus: "The seal consists of the arms of Fletcher and Lord Amherst quartered, with three Tudor roses in chief. As Lord Amherst, from whom the county takes its name, was . . . for some years Governor of Virginia, it seems appropriate that his arms should be quartered on the shield. The Tudor roses symbolize Sweet Briar, although they are not the color of the sweet briar rose, for pink is not a proper heraldic tint. At the same



time, though rather remotely, it is true, they might suggest Virginia, through Elizabeth Tudor, the Virgin Queen, from whom our State derives its name."

Dr. McBryde submitted to the board several mottoes, favoring himself "A perfect woman, nobly planned" as "indicative of the aim and policy of the school." The board, however, chose instead the one favored by his son, "Rosam quae meruit ferat"—perhaps with a mind to offering bearers of the seal a chance to savor one of the pleasures of higher education when they read the Latin with understanding.

In the summer of 1901 the board unanimously elected Dr. McBryde to the presidency of Sweet Briar Institute with a salary of \$5,000 and a house. He asked to be allowed to postpone his acceptance "until he could see his way clearly," and for the rest of that year the *Lynchburg News* was kept on the run following reports "from the best authority" of Dr. McBryde's intentions: a week after the election "nothing definite has been heard . . . it is believed that he will accept"; five days later ". . . will announce within a few days . . . urged by many not to give up the presidency of V.P.I."; next day "Dr. McBryde at Sweet Briar farm . . . not yet decided"; a month later ". . . acceptance announced; will remain president of V.P.I. and conduct the business of Sweet Briar Institute as well . . . expected that Sweet Briar will open in 1902"; two days later ". . . acceptance a mistake."

This error had occurred in a striking demonstration of man's fallibility in the excitement of communication. A "special" sent from Amherst to Lynchburg on a Wednesday stated that on the previous Sunday the *News* had carried Dr. Arthur P. Gray's affirmation of the acceptance. On Thursday the *News* printed the "special" from Amherst without taking a look at its own Sunday issue—in which nothing on the subject appeared. Four months later the *Baltimore Sun* beamed more false light into the picture; it is quoted by the *News* as announcing that "Dr. J. M. McBryde will resign the presidency of V.P.I. at the end of the present session to assume charge of Sweet

Briar Institute, the Episcopal female college to be started in Amherst County."

These notices clearly demonstrated the interest of the neighborhood, indeed of the South, in the "Institute." They also raise the question of an "Episcopal female college."

There have been three subjects for debate which have occupied many a conversational hour for those who find Sweet Briar an engaging topic:

Was it intended to be a church school?

Was it originally a preparatory school?—or a finishing school?—or a junior college?

Was it a vocational or trade school?

These controversies have in general taken place outside the school and long after the matters had been decided by the directors. There are signs of nothing but complete accord among the directors that, in the first place, the school was to be free of denominational control.

Bishop Randolph and Dr. Grammer are chiefly credited with this decision. Many persons have argued with deep conviction—and a few still do—that Mrs. Williams intended the school to be under the aegis of the Episcopal church. They ask, "Why, of four trustees, did she name three Episcopal clergymen if she did not mean to have a church school?"

Those who argue on the other side find, in addition to the glaring omission of such intent in her will, powerful support in the words of Dr. Rollins: "Bishop Randolph," he said, "had a fear of denominational partisanship. Hence he surrendered the control of the college by his own church, and by himself, in order that it might have the freedom he thought so necessary. He was a broad-minded man, and would have agreed with Clement of Alexandria that 'The Way of Truth is one, and into it, as into a never-failing river, flow streams from all sides.' Such a free surrender of denominational and personal control, when many felt he was doing wrong to make the surrender, was a truly generous and noble act, seldom paralleled—and it



deserves to be commemorated by this college for all time."

In throwing further light on Bishop Randolph's spiritual quality, Dr. Rollins describes well that religious philosophy which has continued to characterize Sweet Briar through the years: ". . . in wishing Sweet Briar to be undenominational Bishop Randolph did not for a moment wish it to be secular or non-religious. . . . He realized 'the loneliness of a soul in which there is no altar.' He understood, more than any other man I have known, the place of religion in life. But he had faith that the free and untrammelled search for Truth would lead to God, who has created in His children the desire to know."

To Bishop Randolph and Dr. Grammer, Dr. Rollins also attributes profound influence on a second great decision, namely the determination to found "a liberal arts college of the highest rank." There was reason enough to believe that many parents of southern girls would prefer a finishing school. There was nearby Randolph-Macon Woman's College, only ten years old and, it might be argued, well able to take care of such demands as might arise in the region for educating young women at the college level. But these two men and the other directors with them held to the purpose of creating the best possible instrument for a liberal arts education—and one which need not draw only from the region.

It was Dr. McBryde who read a statement of policy for the institute at the first meeting of the board of directors. He, Bishop Randolph, and Dr. Grammer had apparently met as a committee and formulated "a declared wish and purpose . . . to give such shape and scope to the Sweet Briar Institute as will make it a worthy monument to the liberality of its founder and the first among the establishments for female education in the State and the South. . . ."

Sweet Briar was never a preparatory school, nor a finishing school, nor a junior college. Neither was it a vocational or trade school. On these points, however, there were circumstances which might account for mistaken conclusions. When the time came to accept students it was found that so many secondary schools failed to give adequate college

preparation that some supplement had to be made to the regular college course. As a result, 'sub-freshman' classes were offered and some of the students were obliged to augment their preparation before entering regular classes, but regular college classes were always given and plans of the institution were always focused on them.

As for the notion of vocational courses, that first statement read by Dr. McBryde on April 22, 1901, did indeed contain an unusual proposition for the new college to "take possession of a territory hitherto overlooked and neglected." It was proposed that Sweet Briar should combine characteristics of "Western and Southern schools which aim to equip women for the practical vocations of life" and Northern schools which are "intellectual."

It was cautiously admitted that "industrial training can be made if only a safe equilibrium be provided for, to supplement, strengthen and enrich the intellect." It was adventurously resolved "that Sweet Briar shall attempt this new line of educational effort . . . distinctly peculiar to our own." The idea was further enthusiastically developed for courses "of proper adaptation to the needs and conditions of the female mind—some literary and some scientific—and, along with them, thoroughly practical training in certain artistic and industrial branches of knowledge—the two lines of work so arranged and coordinated that the choice of any one of the four years' courses will carry with it the election of a given number of the practical branches."

There is no way of knowing how extensively this novel conception was discussed by the board members or how serious were their attempts to develop it. There was discussion aplenty, however, among the people of Amherst. They knew that when Miss Indie died there were thousands of yards of materials and other large quantity purchases of unusual things. They deduced that she surely planned for the students of Sweet Briar to learn to sew and possibly to carve meats they had cooked themselves. But she had not said this in her will.

It lay with the board of directors to decide how best



to educate "useful members of society." Four years elapsed before the minutes of the board show another discussion of academic details. By that time they seemed ready enough to align their requirements and aims with those of existing colleges and the new departure was forgotten. Oddly enough, however, the full description of this "new line of educational effort" appeared in the first pages of eight successive catalogues. Anyone reading that without further inspection of the catalogue could have drawn a wholly erroneous conclusion.

The directors of Sweet Briar Institute may well be excused from pondering theories of education in the face of the task which confronted them. They had to build, in effect, a small town to house ultimately five to six hundred people.

If Dr. McBryde hesitated to commit himself to preside over the finished product he at least did not stint himself in building the "town" and preparing for the college. Bishop Randolph asked him and he agreed, to shoulder the great responsibilities of the chairmanship of the executive committee. Besides, he was to act as "superintendent of the plans, the material, and the equipment of the Institute and [to be] the authoritative manager of all the property in the hands of the trustees." For this he received an annual salary of \$2,500 a year and he earned it.

Given a task Dr. McBryde at once envisioned things to do, how to do them, and whose aid to enlist. Then he began speaking of these things with buoyancy and optimism. To this undertaking he brought a vast sum of information, a decided sense of style, a persistence in the face of myriads of difficulties, and an energetic exuberance over the creation of a wholly new school.

He went forward energetically to fulfill his dream that at the opening of the college "there should be nothing of the new and raw to offend the senses, but every spot, every object should make its aesthetic appeal." He was convinced that "attractive surroundings and artistic buildings have a profound and lasting influence on the hearts and

minds of young girls just emerging into womanhood." He foresaw that this new school would be supported chiefly by its patronage and that it "must appeal for patronage by the reputation of its teachers and by the beauty of its plant and surroundings." He never wavered in his conviction that the best was none too good for Sweet Briar, a decision which was to give trouble later but from which, even so, Sweet Briar was to profit greatly.

No one quarrels with the first step he took. He had been impressed by an article in the *New Churchman* which Ralph Adams Cram had written on church architecture. Dr. McBryde promptly asked Mr. Cram to visit him at Blacksburg and together they went to Sweet Briar to study the possibilities. Mr. Cram recommended red or yellow brick. Dr. McBryde, who had an opinion on everything and a strong sense of fitness, questioned red brick because he had no wish to see "red splotches on the landscape." To settle the question barrels of Sweet Briar clay were shipped to Blacksburg where test bricks were burned. The baking softened the red of the clay and made an interesting texture of the rough and cracked surface. Everyone was pleased with the result and the Board ordered estimates and plans from Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson of Boston for two dormitories, an academic building, and a refectory.

"The drawings and sketches of the proposed Sweet Briar Institute," the *Lynchburg News* reported in the spring of 1902, "will be placed on exhibition in the windows of the office of the Lynchburg Traction and Light Co. on Main St. where they can be seen by all persons who may be interested in the best of architecture and in modern ideas for educational institutions. These pictures . . . are exceedingly handsome and attractive in appearance. That they will be greatly admired by the public is a foregone conclusion."

And so they were. Those buildings connected by sheltering arcades of the same warm-toned brick have created a Georgian atmosphere which has pleased many a visitor and lingered happily in the memory of many an alumna. It would not be too much to say that they have had "a



profound and lasting influence on the hearts and minds of young girls" even as Dr. McBryde hoped they might.

The ambitious superintendent went on to dam the little stream where Daisy used to fish. This formed a lake—not to supply water, for that was to come from springs and wells—but for a bit of jolly boating. Once the lake was placidly filling the hollow at the bottom of the hill Dr. McBryde at once envisioned "a neat little boat house" and some boats. These too were supplied.

He went on to advocate the building of an ice-house below the dam, a barn "for milch cows and pleasure horses . . . for the use of the students." He prescribed that the infirmary then being set up in Sweet Briar House should be equipped with the "best modern hospital furniture. . . . Each professor's house . . . must have a cabin on the edge of the grove for servants' quarters. . . . The woods nearest the buildings should be cleared . . . to convert it into a park. . . . The grounds," he continued, "must be laid out tastefully and be well-kept."

Dr. McBryde saw the president handsomely set up in a residence removed a good distance from the campus. Mount St. Angelo, Aunt Lilybell's Italian dream sitting serenely on a hill a good mile from the dormitories appealed to Dr. McBryde. He would have it remodeled for the president's mansion.

He even foresaw that "the girls must have some place at which conveniently to spend their pocket money" and he incorporated such a facility into his conception of the new depot which would have to be erected: the station should have "ticket office, baggage, express and telegraph offices, and a store in one end with rooms for the store-keeper and station-master above. . . . It will be cheaper in the end if built of brick. The store I think can be made to pay handsomely. . . . One man can easily act as agent and store-keeper, as well as postmaster." He thought it could be arranged for the girls to get their books and stationery there; "this would attract the girls more frequently to the establishment." In short, his reports "ranged over all of the requirements that could enter into a well-

kept farm, a luxurious hotel and a properly equipped college."

Dr. McBryde's interests and plans did not stop with buildings and grounds. In his busy past he had worked out a system of bookkeeping which was "admired and approved" by the board. It voted that up to \$100 could be used to purchase the necessary books for it.

When the architect's estimates for the college buildings arrived they seemed inordinately high. Dr. McBryde knew a contractor in Blacksburg to whom he submitted the plans and got an estimate that was half that of the architect's. When Mr. Cram came for a visit he was "astounded at . . . [the cheapness of the work] as compared with the cost of similar work in the North." As work proceeded he found the brick-laying "remarkably good, equal to the very best work of northern masons."

Arrangements were made for the Institute's own forests to supply wood to the contractor, oak and poplar for sheds during construction, dead wood and field pine for firing the bricks; up to 3,000 cords of the latter were available for the making of an estimated 1,000,000 bricks.

Dr. McBryde found time to bring a horticulturist from V.P.I. to Sweet Briar to advise on the location for orchards and vegetable gardens, for the plan was that the farm should furnish flour, meat, vegetables, and milk to the school. An orchard of one thousand apple trees was authorized in 1902. Fifty years later when a changed agricultural economy dictated that it should be removed thousands of alumnae mourned, for not only were the Sweet Briar apples delicious but the orchard in blossom was one of the most memorable beauties of the campus.

When bids for the road which was to connect the college to the proposed station proved exorbitant, the ever-resourceful superintendent decided that the college could build its own road. He confidently said that Colonel Patton, the engineer in charge of constructing the dam and the lesser roads around the campus, was "perhaps the best, certainly the most reliable, civil engineer in the South." He could supervise this new road which would



have to be started from scratch; labor and teams of the Institute's could be used and the low rock walls which had divided fields since the time of Elijah Fletcher could be run through a rock crusher for the foundation beneath a macadam top.

With an eye for public relations Dr. McBryde saw that the Louisiana Purchase Exposition of 1904 in St. Louis offered an opportunity for the announcement of Sweet Briar Institute to a big public. He seized the opportunity, engaged floor space and sent on the drawings of the architects and photos of the grounds.

While the superintendent was thus absorbed other members of the board worked willingly if less spectacularly. Bishop Randolph put in unclerical afternoons in the interests of the water-supply, visiting "every spring within a radius of some miles . . . even springs on distant mountain ridges." Dr. Carson went to visit Hampton Normal School with a view to obtaining ideas and information for the Sweet Briar plans. Dr. Grammer asked the president of Bryn Mawr College, Miss M. Carey Thomas, for her opinion on the constitution of a faculty. He considered untenable her opinion that in the lofty intellectual atmosphere of a college it was of little moment whether the male professors were married or not.

Everyone seemed to be pulling his weight toward the preparation for the new school on the red clay hill—except for one man. At first it was suspected that he was resting on the oars. At last it was concluded that he was pulling in the opposite direction. This was Mr. Harding, Mrs. Williams' farm manager and the executor of her estate.

Once Sweet Briar Institute was incorporated it seemed meet and right for Mr. Harding to turn over the estate to the corporation, but he continued to live in Sweet Briar House. Likewise, he demurred when legal counsel for the board requested him to transfer to the corporation the securities which had belonged to Mrs. Williams.

He was within his rights as executor to retain control

of the estate for one year after the decease of Mrs. Williams, but his attitude did not reassure his fellow board members that he held an earnest intention to forward the organization of a new college. When Mr. Harding paid \$9,000 to an Amherst lawyer, according to the board minutes "to help in the procurement of the charter" Dr. McBryde pointed out that not only was the sum "outrageous" but that it was the legal duty of the trustees, not the executor, to procure the charter. The trustees had already done so through their own lawyer and Mr. Harding as a trustee had every reason to know this. But for two years he remained in Sweet Briar House and continued to negotiate securities of the estate before he left the board in 1903.

The uncooperative executor was only one of the board's perplexities at this time. The contractor for the buildings, in spite of the excellent masonry he had produced to amaze Mr. Cram, was something less than the combination of purchasing agent, expeditor, and labor relations expert who was needed for the job.

For one thing he had not taken into account the uncertainties of transportation to the remote hall of learning which he had bargained to build. A delay of ten days in the shipment from Lynchburg of a carload of lime which was located eventually on a siding at Monroe, cost him uncalculated wages for men who could not work while they waited. This was one of the delays which contributed to the fomenting of a strike by restless, isolated workmen.

The contractor had also failed to "close a bargain . . . for the composition of stone cornices and pillars" when the contract was drawn. Two years later, when he was ready to procure them, prices had risen to a point where he needed \$3,000 in excess of the original estimate. The sympathetic board compromised by offering him an extra \$2,200. The harassed man soon found himself in bankruptcy court and the Sweet Briar board found itself without a builder.

J. P. Pettyjohn of Lynchburg replaced the contractor and Dr. McBryde brought this news to the board with his



customary tendency to accentuate the positive: "While the cost will be greater, the saving of time effected by the change will more than compensate for the increased expenditures." Even for him, however, there was nothing cheering to say when the board's lawyers advised that the institute was legally bound by a contract made by the displaced man which necessitated the payment of \$5,300 to settle a suit brought by a Roanoke manufacturing company.

Ossa was heaped on Pelion when it was found that the specifications had not included plastering the ceiling of the refectory, a two-thousand-dollar operation. And somehow balustrades around the roofs of the dormitories had been omitted. These would require an additional \$500 to \$600. The architect's strong recommendation that Flemish bond for the masonry would be well worth the \$1,000 extra it would cost had already been complied with.

There came also the news that the well being drilled at St. Angelo had been abandoned when 300 feet of drilling had produced no water. And the well at the pump house near the lake was producing only ten gallons per minute where sixty were needed; two other wells near it were recommended.

The opening of college was still two years away when the pretty little lake began filling up with sediment. This called for the building of catch dams, "at small expense," said Dr. McBryde confidently, to prevent soil from the cultivated land around Paul's Mountain from washing into the lake. He also had to relate that the trees and shrubs on the margin of the lake were "unfortunately cut away through mistake." Without stopping to hear a sigh from his listeners he went right on: "They will be replanted and will certainly be the most attractive feature of our grounds."

The least of the losses in this period was an unforeseen operating expense: Mule died—debit \$200. The least distraction was a letter received in November 1904: Stephen Harding petitioned to be reinstated on the board.

It can be seen that the matter of finances was becoming a dominant concern. At the beginning it did not seem as if it should have been. The estate had included Sweet Briar House, Mount St. Angelo, eight thousand acres of land, and approximately \$500,000 in liquid assets. After the granting of the charter, the *Lynchburg News* had seen nothing but smooth sailing and blandly reported that \$100,000 will be laid out in improvements which will leave the sum of \$400,000 for an endowment." It sounded easy and adequate.

But from the moment that Mrs. Payne saw the appraisal list of Miss Indie's personal property and spotted the absence of her solitaire diamond ring there was evidence of loss through depredation, depreciation, unforeseen necessity, and sheer misfortune.

By the middle of 1905 it seemed that the best which could be hoped for was the preservation of somewhat less than \$200,000 for endowment. The business experience of the members of the board varied greatly, but even the least knowing one must have been stirred by uneasy feelings that too much money was slipping through their fingers. What they may have thought of the ever increasing expenditures is not recorded until the day that they visited St. Angelo to inspect the progress in remodeling.

They were horrified—and they said so in writing. The minute in the secretary's book is in the most temperate language but it is plain what consternation filled their breasts.

It was December of 1905 and Dr. McBryde was ill; he had gone to Jamaica to restore himself from the exertions which had depleted even his great energies. It was as well for him that he was not present when the gentlemen discovered the scale on which Mount St. Angelo was being reconstructed. They had appropriated \$7,500 for the work; on this day they discovered that \$11,000 had already been spent. It was not finished and another \$5,000 would be needed for completion.

They admitted in all fairness that although "the building is from an artistic point of view an ornament to the



grounds, the Board is not convinced that it will not lay itself open to the charge of extravagance and misjudgment in so far exceeding the sum that a dispassionate judgment would think a proper expenditure for such a purpose.

"Still profounder," they continued, coming to the point, "is the concern . . . that the \$7,500 has been exceeded without any Board action. They had directed an eight-room house after considerable discussion and emphasis upon the necessity of economy. . . .

"The Board appreciates profoundly the remarkable constructive and administrative gifts of the Chairman of the Executive Committee. . . . They feel the greatest sympathy with him in his ill health . . . but nevertheless . . . feel that they must take some action under the circumstances. . . ." They specifically declared that when the money was gone work should stop until another appropriation should be made; that changes must not be made in the board's plans; that "greater system in the regulation of committees" is needed; that a copy of the minute be given to Dr. McBryde on his return. His domain was to be limited to the control of Sweet Briar House, the entertaining of visitors, and to educational matters; in the last, at least, he was to remain in command.

Nathaniel Clayton Manson was named to be chairman of the executive committee "during the absence of Dr. McBryde or until further notice."

Mr. Manson, the man who was to wrestle mightily and ultimately successfully with Sweet Briar's grave problems of finance and construction, was born in Lynchburg in 1858, the year that Elijah Fletcher died. In 1903 the board had unanimously chosen Mr. Manson to fill the vacancy left by the death of Mr. Carson.

Everyone who has spoken or written of Mr. Manson makes free use of superlatives, and descriptions which start with well-rounded phrases praising his ability are soon permeated with terms of affection. The first president of the college said that "no one contributed more to the founding of Sweet Briar College in an essential way than

Mr. Manson. If there had been a less able, less devoted or less understanding man in charge of the college finances during the early days of Sweet Briar the college would not be here today." She remembers him "greeting each girl by name, asking about all our little happenings. . . . I know the strength he was to us. . . . One just couldn't be discouraged with Mr. Manson there."

Nat Manson's winning qualities were displayed early. A native of Lynchburg, he taught for three years after his graduation from Hampden-Sydney College so that he might study law. It turned out that his funds were sufficient to see him through only one year of the law school of the University of Virginia, so he completed his course in that year. Somehow he also found time to win the medal for boxing and to make good friends who elected him president of his class, which numbered among its members young Woodrow Wilson.

Mr. Manson was twenty-five when he was elected mayor of Lynchburg. His election was celebrated by a torchlight parade up Church Street and down Main Street, formed by followers who were numerous enough and loyal enough to elect him twice again before he returned to the practice of law. Besides his private law practice, he also was engaged as city attorney, and vice-president of the National Exchange Bank of Lynchburg.

His work for Sweet Briar was almost a second full-time job. As chairman of the executive committee he was voted a salary but this he refused. He considered himself part and parcel of the effort to create this new college; his responses to it far exceeded the acquittal of mere duty or civic responsibility. He had lost his only child, a little girl, when she was but a year and a half old, and perhaps the way in which he took Sweet Briar to his heart was an unconscious memorial to that little girl.

All his life Mr. Manson found time for frequent games of tennis or golf and he loved riding. Later on, when he was less robust, he had a clock golf set made at the foot of the terrace in front of Academic and one of his great pleasures was playing there with some of the Sweet Briar



girls. He did not swim but even at the water's edge he had his influence. There is a story of one of the girls, attempting her first dive, who asked him to stand by her. He said, "What do you want with me? I can't swim a stroke." "But," she answered, "if you stand by me I am not scared." Mrs. Manson, who liked Sweet Briar herself, said recently that "he loved everything from the pigs to the pupils. He loved to take his friends there and show them the place. We often went to spend the day or we'd go out and take supper there. I remember once we made a weekend houseparty there with two of his college classmates and their wives."

Mr. and Mrs. Manson enjoyed entertaining the students, and the Sunday dinners to which members of the senior class were invited are still recalled happily by alumnae. The dining table had to be enlarged as classes grew, and at last the Mansons had to have one especially built to accommodate their guests.

Mrs. Manson, who still lives in Lynchburg, recalls her first visit to Sweet Briar in 1903 when Mr. Manson went on the board. They had neither of them known Mrs. Williams nor any of the Fletcher family. Their association with the place dated from that summer day when they went by train to Coolwell, thence by carriage around Monument Hill and along Sunset Road in front of the place where the gymnasium now stands, and around the West Dell up to Sweet Briar House.

It was something of a thrill to reach this house and actually to enter it. Few Lynchburg people had. By the end of the Civil War the Fletchers had let lapse their ties in Lynchburg and by 1900 Sweet Briar House, although only fifteen miles away, had taken on a rather legendary character. It was vaguely thought of as a treasure-house of objects brought back by the Fletcher children from their world travels; an *idée fixe* prevailed that it was a mansion of thirty rooms, although today no one can count more than eighteen. Even the staff of the *Lynchburg News* was not sufficiently familiar with the place to correct a dispatch from Richmond referring to it as "Green Brier."

The thrill of entering Sweet Briar House that day was for Mrs. Manson soon dissipated when she found it filled with a "conglomeration of furnishings and equipment. In one room were stacks of curtain tiebacks [which evidently had tempted no one at the auction]; in another room there was furniture piled helter-skelter, some beautiful things, some cheap and ugly." The house was also in need of repairs. However, given energy, discrimination, time, and resources, deterioration can be turned to beauty; the old house soon regained its welcoming charm.

If anticipation of a new college rising from the hills of Sweet Briar had at first seemed pleasantly exciting to nearby Virginians, news of the difficulties in which it found itself still seemed fair grist for the gossip mills of those who had no responsibility in it. Any of us is apt to be casual in comment and judgment on affairs which do not touch us, and there was more than enough comment and judgment on the affairs of Sweet Briar.

In Amherst there were some who had resented the aloof attitude of the Williamses toward their neighbors and there were others who deplored the loss in taxes suffered by the county treasury when so many acres were removed from the list of taxables.

Mr. Manson's mother went on a visit to Wytheville where her ear was so filled with tales of mismanagement of Sweet Briar funds that she returned deeply concerned and begged her son to withdraw from the whole business. However, from his seat on the board, Mr. Manson felt better able than the citizens of Wytheville to judge the risks and promises of seeing the new college through to completion. He elected to stay and to work.

The directors of Sweet Briar not only had a great amount of work to do, but it was labor of a most diverse sort. They might, for example, find themselves listening to reports of assets which included two mares named Flossie and Lottie, or they might be called upon to dispose of a plethora of dress patterns which Miss Indie had accumulated. Again, they might have to ponder the dis-



position of sixteen outlying rented farms on remote mountain lands, some of them, from which produce had to be brought on ground slides down to the nearest road. And their main business for a long time was of course the myriad decisions to be made in connection with construction of the physical plant.

It was the spring of 1904 before the board could focus serious attention again on the academic aspects of the college which they were building. Fundamental decisions on the non-sectarian and collegiate status of Sweet Briar had been settled early. The directors pointed out in an early brochure (*ca.* 1904) that they had "given evidence of their unbiassed views by selecting Mr. N. C. Manson, a Presbyterian, to fill the first vacancy in their number . . . and by the selection of non-Episcopalians as farm superintendent and as secretary and treasurer." And now they reiterated that scholastic standing "should be made as high as possible." Dr. John McBryde, Jr., who was in Europe, was commissioned to purchase the first books for a library, and he bought nearly one hundred volumes for a start: books by Macaulay, Froude, Emerson, Carlyle, Lowell, Pepys, Greene, and others.

Annual charges were contemplated and first set at \$500: \$200 for tuition, \$180 for "table board," \$50 for room (if shared with another), \$23 for laundry, \$18 for heat, \$9 for light, and \$10 for an infirmary fee—the only one which did not increase for decades. In the end, however, the board reconsidered and set the total fee at \$450, noting with satisfaction that the charges were "reasonable and below Wellesley and Vassar." The accommodations offered seem spacious indeed: "In the dormitories the rooms will be arranged in suites—two bedrooms and a sitting room—so as to secure to each student greater quiet and privacy."

In the spring of 1905 the opening of the college that fall was dearly hoped for and a timely report from the committee on curriculum was received from Bishop Randolph, Dr. McBryde, and Dr. Grammer. The vision for Sweet Briar to "take possession of a territory hitherto overlooked and neglected" was by then fading; thoughts of combining

western vocational instruction with northern intellectual stimulation had given way to the purpose of making "requirements of admission and graduation high—fully equal to those at Vassar, Bryn Mawr and the Northern colleges of first rank—and to maintain a strict standard of work and scholarship," according to an early brochure. While admitting that the college would at first be small the aspiration was bravely stated for eventually offering courses "leading to the baccalaureate degrees in literature and science, special advanced course for teachers, and graduate courses, with research work, leading to the master's and doctor's degrees."

The turn toward a more conventional goal was a wise move. At that time there were misunderstandings enough to clear up concerning the education of women. An innovation about which parents of potential students would have to be enlightened would multiply the educational duties of the Sweet Briar staff far beyond its aims or desires.

The formation of a sub-freshman class, that so-necessary *bête noire* which was to cause people for decades hence to remain firm in their conviction that Sweet Briar was not truly a college, was also sanctioned "in view of prevailing educational conditions and of the necessity for a longer period of publication to make conditions of entrance generally known." Only "students who could within a year meet the requirements for matriculation" were to be admitted as sub-freshmen.

"Special students . . . their admission . . . carefully guarded," were permitted to come for fewer courses than would be required for graduation if they "gave promise of making a good use of the advantages of the Institution."

Unfortunately it had to be decided to wait another year before measuring applicants against the specifications. There was still too much to be done and Dr. McBryde made the well-taken plea that many "parents will come at the opening and unfinished buildings, grounds ungraded, walks and roads in embryo only, will put us on the defensive. An apologetic attitude at that time, when first impressions count for so much, will be almost fatal."



He pressed for a decision not to open until everything was in "first class condition."

The others agreed. They did at least go ahead to establish a scale for teachers' salaries (\$300 for the meekest assistant, \$2,000 for the grandest professor). They also formulated an expression of their conception of the organization of the teaching staff for the guidance of the president. The burden of this message was that "in such a small community" it would be most "unwise to have unmarried men as teachers"; as married men would be more expensive it would be preferable to employ as professors and associates women who are "competent to act as Dean or Sub-Dean. . . ." It would also be well to "profit by the experience of other women's colleges like Bryn Mawr or Wellesley" and have residents or wardens in the dormitories.

Up to this point about \$200 had been used for photographs and advertising, a sum which today seems amazing—and not for its magnitude. This was in some ways a most curious college. It was growing up in a region where no neighbors had expressed a need for a college and, especially odd, the nearest neighbors, girls of Amherst County, were to be admitted tuition-free. Girls who were residents of the county, and daughters of ministers in Virginia both enjoyed remission of tuition. However, they had to pass the same entrance requirements as everyone else. Mr. Gray's son, Arthur P. Gray, Jr., tutored a group in Amherst in the summer of 1906, and all in the group were admitted to Sweet Briar in September. The patronage of boarding students had to come from a distance and most of it from fairly great distances. It would seem that one of the things most needed was printed publicity appearing frequently in widely spread media. Most of the girls who might constitute the first student body would have to come without seeing the place first; good pictures might have been a potent inducement to them. Yet only \$25 for post-card advertising was set aside!

It must be admitted that January 1906 would have been a particularly difficult time to write good publicity for

Sweet Briar College. There was only one teacher engaged and the president had just resigned. At long last the president of the board of visitors of Virginia Polytechnic Institute had let it be known that Dr. McBryde could not, after all, "see his way clear" to head a girls' institution; he would remain at V.P.I.

The Bishop and Dr. Grammer at once became the "committee to visit, confer, and correspond with the leading educators of the country" to get nominations for a president and a faculty. They were authorized by a fairly desperate board to spend "any sum necessary to carry this out."

By May a "Superintendent of Refectory and Laundry" and a "Warden of Dormitories" had been engaged (both women), a horse and light vehicle to meet visitors and get mail and parcels had been bought, and two men had been employed to keep the lawn in order and an eye on the buildings during the long hours of the night.

Women were at last coming onto the scene at Sweet Briar. The influences in building the college had been entirely masculine with the single exception of Miss Anna L. Jones, a Lynchburg woman who had from the beginning been the board's highly valued aide. Her first title was "temporary financial agent to disburse the money." Then she was elected "Secretary and Treasurer of the Sweet Briar Institute" at the altogether feminine salary of \$50 per month. She proved her worth to the point of commanding later \$1,500 a year and an office in Lynchburg, and Dr. McBryde gratefully handed her little nose-gays in his reports from time to time: ". . . a great help and comfort to me"; "her logical analysis and lucid presentation . . . a never-failing matter of surprise and admiration." In the reorganization that took place when Mr. Manson became chairman of the executive committee Miss Jones was to "have charge of the financial affairs of the Institute . . . and of the furnishing of Sweet Briar House, and is to look after the repairing of the old furniture."

She was also empowered "to present to Andrew Carnegie's secretary the work at the Sweet Briar Institute and



the service that a library built at this place could render the womanhood of the South." (Mr. Carnegie was not convinced.)

When the apartment house at the head of Faculty Row was opened nearly a year before the opening of college Miss Jones's sister was asked to manage it for the convenience of visitors and officers. She and Miss Anna were given four rooms and such furniture from Sweet Briar House as would not be needed there.

Miss Jones must have known as much about Sweet Briar as any living person, and it was unfortunate that her duties were not so organized as to mesh easily with the important new position which was about to be occupied for the first time by another woman. Dr. Grammer had made a westward journey to talk to a young professor of psychology and pedagogy in the State Normal School at Warrensburg, Missouri. He had found her an impressive and able young woman. On the strength of his report the board in a meeting on May 21, 1906, elected her to be the first president of Sweet Briar College.

Her name was Mary Kendrick Benedict.

# *Sweet Briar College: The First Year*

1906-1907

"One day in early June, 1906, when I stepped off the train at Sweet Briar for the first time, I looked around for visible evidence that it was a place on the map, and I saw just the fields with the sign, supported by two posts, that read 'Sweet Briar.'"

The new president had arrived.

The *Richmond Times-Dispatch* described Miss Mary K. Benedict as a woman with "a strong, athletic figure, but withal . . . very graceful." She needed strength then, if ever. She had just come from the ending of a college year and college years seem never to end restfully. Not only had there been examinations to mark and avid registrars to satisfy but the young professor-suddenly-become-college-president had had to pack all she owned and embark on a long dirty train ride of eight hundred miles, broken by a stopover in Cincinnati to share the excitement of the new turn of events with her family.

The drive in a buggy up the long, curving road through an oak forest gave plenty of time for Miss Benedict to savor her surroundings. The great oaks sheltered dogwood which had only recently shed its white radiance. Many birds sang, and a cardinal flashed in front of them. At last the horse and buggy jogged out of the woods and a beautiful dell sloped away steeply to the left. Directly across it stood the faculty apartment where she would first stay. The buggy skirted the top of the dell taking her there first and leaving the crown of the hill studded with the four Cram buildings for later inspection.



Fortunately, when the time came for Miss Benedict to be taken up the hill to see the college she took with her a strong character and excellent training. She knew clearly what she intended to do, and her experience and native resourcefulness would supply her with means for doing it. She had wanted to become a doctor; she and her childhood friend in Cincinnati, Katherine Raymond, had often talked of their common ambition. Her friend had already become Dr. Raymond, but Miss Benedict had postponed her medical career; she went from Vassar into the graduate school at Yale and left there in 1903 with the Ph.D. degree in philosophy and psychology so that she could earn by teaching and help to send her younger brothers and sisters to college. There were six children in the family, and the salary which her father drew as professor of philosophy at the University of Cincinnati would not suffice to see all of them through college.

Her experience in her family and as a professor had taught her not to be dashed by obvious signs of arduous work to come, not depressed by what had not yet been done. If she saw a gap her natural response was to fill it, not bemoan it. On that day in June 1906 there was no dearth of gaps.

First, there were the buildings to consider, four of them, not even named yet. "I remember especially my first sight of the inside of the academic building. There was nothing in it except piles of plaster on the unstained floors, not even a blackboard. The two dormitories looked bare also, but the refectory floor looked smooth and ready to be danced upon. . . . The steam fitting had not been done, the electric light wiring had not been put in, and so we were concerned with getting ready our steam heat, hot water, electric light, steam laundry and cold storage, as well as with staining floors, decorating, getting kitchen and dining room furniture, and academic furniture and equipment."

The executive committee had plans and was working on everything except the finishing of the academic build-

ing and rooms for the infirmary, which seemed to be up to the president. She was ready.

Next morning she waited for Miss Jones, who had been introduced as "the Secretary," to take the first letters for going ahead with this business. Miss Jones failed to appear and when Miss Benedict found her and said, "I am ready, Miss Jones, to start my letters" it was brought abruptly to light that the spoken word had failed to reveal the capital S in Secretary. Miss Jones was hired as "Secretary to the Board," not to the president—and she was also in charge of all financial affairs.

Miss Benedict had not previously been an administrator but she started to become one that morning. She saw that the situation was not workable and the faithful Miss Jones soon had to go.

Then there was the matter of the president's own residence a long look away on the hill at St. Angelo. Miss Benedict was not a gregarious person, but neither was she a hermit, and that great house for one woman seemed rather more than a sufficiency. She took one long look at St. Angelo and elected to live in Sweet Briar House. At its meeting two days later the board moved to dispose of St. Angelo and all its disturbing associations.

Miss Benedict, Mr. Manson, and Mr. Charles Heald of Lynchburg, who in July replaced Dr. McBryde on the board, spent a strenuous summer making purchases and arrangements which would provide adequate housing for faculty and students when September came.

What faculty?

There was not even a list. It was very easy to tell Miss Benedict the names of both the professors thus far employed: McBryde and Berkeley. Dr. J. M. McBryde, Jr. was present in the flesh and busy helping in many ways to prepare for the opening in September. He had been engaged by the board a year earlier to be professor of English, and his own interest in Sweet Briar was not diminished by the withdrawal of his father, who had resigned from the board. He left an associate professorship at the University of North Carolina to come to Sweet Briar. The other



faculty member was Dr. William N. Berkeley who was to be professor of physics, chemistry, and geology, each of these subjects being somewhat less cosmic in those days than now. Dr. Berkeley had been professor of chemistry at St. Johns College in Annapolis and later had been chemist for the island of Puerto Rico. Both young men had doctorates from the Johns Hopkins University. An excellent beginning, but already it was June.

Miss Benedict secured a secretary from Amherst who would write letters for her, and in one month she was able to present to the board a list of eight other teachers, the whole faculty for the first year. Two of them never left: Miss Gay Patteson and Dr. Mary Harley. Miss Patteson was a small and witty mathematician whose demeanor was gentle and retiring. She was a Virginian who had been educated at Columbia University and Cornell University. She had taught at Mount Holyoke College and came to Sweet Briar from the Farmville (Virginia), State Normal School where she had been head of the mathematics department. After two years at Sweet Briar she went to Germany for a year's study in the course of which she translated from the German a text on projective geometry which was used for some years by Sweet Briar's students in mathematics. Her interests ranged through detective stories, politics, local affairs, whist, and occasionally, writing verse. Until her failing health made it wise for her to return to her native Richmond in 1946, Miss Gay contributed much of piquant zest and wise counsel to the campus life.

Dr. Harley, the physician, was not at all retiring. One of her colleagues has described her thus: "I remember vividly when I first met Dr. Harley. She was out-of-doors and her red hair was shining in the sun. Her brilliant warm coloring and her lively dark eyes made an indelible impression upon me. Her lameness came as a shock, but her gaiety and nonchalance seemed to defy an unimportant handicap. As I hopped out of the buggy she said 'You don't get out of there like a southerner.'" Dr. Harley was used to speaking her mind and this new arrival was later to be dismayed when the doctor "got furious with me be-

cause I went to teach my class one time after she had told me to stay in bed." But Dr. Harley's vehemence was transitory and when real trouble came she gave her whole time and attention to whoever needed it.

Miss Benedict had written to her at Vassar where she was on the infirmary staff and had reinforced her invitation to Sweet Briar with pictures of the college. These, Dr. Harley admitted, "roused my English blood and, as I longed for life in the open spaces which I had never known in New York, I came." She was not disappointed; walking one day with a friend, she heard a far off whistle of a train and commented, "That's the only thing that makes me know I'm not in Eden."

Dr. Harley was to teach physiology and hygiene and to have charge of the infirmary. Rooms in Sweet Briar House were set aside for an infirmary during the first year of college and the gardener's cottage was to be a contagion ward, but fortunately that never had to be used.

Miss Helen F. Young, who came to direct the study of music, was British born and bred. She came recommended by "Professor Teichmuller of Leipzig, who regards her as one of the few persons who is able to train pupils so they can study with him," and she is unanimously remembered at Sweet Briar as a really great teacher and leader. "Under her dynamic leadership and care, the music department grew and broadened and deepened," as one of her colleagues said, "until at last—after she was no longer there—music was given the rank of one of the major subjects at the college." Her interest and feeling for music attracted so many students in piano and singing that the music staff soon grew to three instructors and the necessity for buying more pianos nearly upset the college budget one year. As if she were not busy enough with regular classes, she also gave lectures one year on music appreciation to the college as a whole and helped "students and many bystanders who were innocent of music" to share her enthusiasm.

Miss Susan Moses came as associate professor of Latin and Greek. She had spent two years on the faculty at Sophie Newcomb College after receiving her A.B. and



A.M. degrees from Cornell University, and she was acknowledged to have "a distinct genius for languages." She was respected on the Sweet Briar faculty not only for her ability in classics but for her excellent Christmas eggnog as well. She left Sweet Briar after a short time to marry Edward Kidder Graham, who later became president of the University of North Carolina.

Mr. J. Mitchell Humphreys filled "the chair of modern languages," as the *Lynchburg News* grandly referred to the one person teaching French and German. Mr. Humphreys, "with his ragged eye-brows and bald head—a very genius," had been educated at the University of Virginia and the University of Rostock, and had supplemented his formal education by several years of life in Europe. He brought to Sweet Briar a Viennese wife who was a gifted 'cellist and turned their home into a musical center. Mrs. Dew recalls that "those pioneer days in the woods were often brightened by a really excellent trio, consisting of the Humphreys—he played the violin—and Mr. de Launay at the piano. Everyone who loved music was welcomed and sometimes we stayed until early morning."

The Humphreys' lively children conversed in three languages, mixed in more or less equal parts. They were brought up in a fashion far in advance of the times. "The faculty," says one of its members, "was apt to gather at the Humphreys' after dinner and the chatter woke the children who came down the steps one by one to join in the fun. When the last and youngest came trotting down, the father would say cheerfully, 'Now I'm perfectly satisfied that there are no more children to wake up.'"

The other professor with long European training was Professor Paul de Launay, a French baron who had studied art under Benjamin Constant, Jean Paul Laurens, and others at the Académie Julian and the Beaux-Arts. He had also studied music under Guilmant and César Franck, and, although he was engaged to teach art, it was as a musician that he was best remembered. He played frequently on campus and the University of Virginia invited him to give a recital on its new organ.

Mr. de Launay wore a beard in an endeavor to appear old enough to be the husband of his English wife whom he adored and who was twenty years his senior. She gave him steadiness and he gave her love and gaiety. She died when Sweet Briar was celebrating its first Christmas as a college. He had decorated the house for her with red bells and paper streamers and he never had the heart to take them down. It was only when he left in June, never to return, that they were discarded.

Miss Eleanor S. Tucker who was to be instructor in biology came from Norfolk, "where her name is a guarantee of culture and ability," as the *Lynchburg News* put it. She was freshly graduated from Columbia University, as was Miss Jessamine Chapman who was to be in charge of domestic science. Miss Chapman was one of those who caused Miss Benedict to say, "We suffered from appreciation of our faculty and lost some of them to institutions, some to husbands." Miss Chapman, now Mrs. Richard H. Williams, later became head of the domestic science department at the University of Oregon. She writes that her frequent reminiscences of years in Virginia have given her husband the opinion that she secretly hopes when she dies to go to Sweet Briar instead of heaven.

It was a good faculty and in the only recorded statement of Miss Benedict's which breaks through her great modesty and expresses a modicum of pride she says "... that was ... where I really think I did something—I picked out some fine people, both for the faculty and the student group. Once they got there, Sweet Briar won them, but it often took some persuading to get them to come."

The student group?

"Later on in the day"—that same day when Miss Benedict had got off the train in the fields—"I investigated the enrollment list for the session 1906-1907 and I found that it contained the name of one student." This was Lillian Selden Lloyd of Lynchburg whose name had been on the list for two years to warm the hearts of all interested. It was a name which in the minds of the board and president



must have been framed like the first dollar a merchant receives in a new business.

But if we can grow a little sentimental over this young lady, Miss Benedict could not; she had no time to. She knew that by September the buildings would somehow be in order, ready for the students—and who would come? Where could parents be found to part with daughters and tuition money for a doubtful trip into the hills of Virginia? This was not a time when teen-age girls were looked to for pioneering, nor was it an era that predominantly approved adventure. It was not even an era in which a strong majority were convinced that it was an advantage for a woman to hold a college degree. Only a dozen years or so before the founding of Sweet Briar, Frederick A. P. Barnard, president of Columbia College, was seeking aid in a venture to admit women to his college. He was turned off by one prospect whose last word in the refusal was, "I would preserve the bloom on the peach as long as possible." This esthetic goal came from a woman who lived in the urbane center of progress and enlightenment, New York City.

By 1906 the northeast section of the country was much more inclined to believe in the saying that "When you educate a man you educate an individual, but when you educate a woman you educate a family." Parents there were readily sending their daughters to college. But the south was, in general, not eager for higher education for women. It was a distinct minority who held the opinion that young women could profit from—nay! even bear the physical strain of—being educated. And some of those admitted that highly cultivated young ladies risked having fewer opportunities for matrimony.

In all parts of the country there had been, only a few decades earlier, a dearth of young women who were prepared for college. When Wellesley opened its doors in 1875 the first students numbered 314 of whom only 58 were ready for regular college work. And the south was far behind the rest of the nation in programs for public education. At the beginning of the twentieth century,

with a far greater proportion of children in its total population, a far smaller taxable per capita wealth, and the heavy expense of a double system for black and white pupils, the south had its public schools characterized as "miserably supported, poorly attended, wretchedly taught, and wholly inadequate for the education of the people." Charles W. Dabney, the educator with whom Sweet Briar's second president served in Tennessee and later in Cincinnati, said frankly that, outside of a few large cities, the high schools of the south were "nothing more than an addition of a few miscellaneous courses to the common school." Consequently, students who could qualify for college work had to prepare almost exclusively in private schools and academies.

And so Miss Mary Benedict viewed with well-founded alarm that lonely name on her enrollment list. The five years of work already put into Sweet Briar College would be fruitless unless a potent and immediate appeal were made to that minority of forward-looking parents who not only sought a college education for their daughters but who also were not afraid of the new and who could be persuaded that this undertaking in Virginia would provide a worthy experience for them. This was no paltry task for a young woman of thirty-one. She immediately asked the board for money to publicize Sweet Briar, and \$5,000 was appropriated for pamphlets, books of views, pictures and descriptions in newspapers and magazines, and recruiting trips. Dr. McBryde called at schools and homes in Virginia and Miss Benedict went "southward and through Georgia" telling of the proposed opportunities to be offered at Sweet Briar.

The result was that the first student body included 51 girls, 36 boarders from twelve states and 15 day-students. One girl made the long trip from Dallas, Texas, but it is likely that her annual traveling time was no greater than that of the 14 hardy girls who made a daily round trip from Amherst by buggy or horseback, and one who came by train from Lynchburg.



Anyone who has built a house, even a little one, can guess what other complications the summer of 1906 presented at Sweet Briar. There was the telephone system to be installed and a house to be erected for an engineer-electrician whose presence had not been foreseen as a necessity. The pump for the water supply cracked and the tennis courts and basketball field had to be "moved" to the site where the library now stands. A package of music was vainly sought for several days until it turned up in the kitchen of the refectory where it had been identified as meat and stowed in the ice box. A case thought to contain Miss Benedict's filing cabinet was set up in her office according to her directions and when the crating was removed Professor de Launay's kitchen cabinet stood revealed. Twenty-two days before school was to open, the Westinghouse Company had not yet shipped the dynamos and "every effort was made to impress the company that if the buildings are in darkness we shall suffer irreparable injury." (Those are the words left in the secretary's book; who can say what may have been committed to the unpreserving air?)

The division superintendent of the Southern Railroad, though under constant pressure from Sweet Briar's executive committee, had not had time until September 1 to meet and agree on arrangements for a station. At that time he consented to move the siding, help in leveling a spot where trains would stop, and contribute \$100 toward the erection of a shed. That active center of trade and communication envisioned by Dr. McBryde as the Sweet Briar station had already been cut down to a fifteen-hundred-dollar one-room building, and as time drew shorter and shorter for the students actually to dismount from the train, telegram after telegram was sent to the railroad for official permission to construct a shelter on its right-of-way. At last, permission came through the day before the students did and lumber was rushed to the spot, but of course it was too late. Next day it rained and there came the students! At least, "the Committee had hired an omnibus

from a Lynchburg stable and the scholars were thus protected from the weather."

Some of the scholars would no doubt have gladly taken the next train home. A lady in her city clothes finds a wet day in the country bleak enough, but to be, as many were, for the first time away from home and to drive through dripping trees to the top of a hill where "stood the new and naked buildings so appallingly empty, unrelieved by bush or blade of grass" was iron entering into the soul. Where was the promise of gay and surreptitious midnight suppers? Where the mandolins and college banners? It was cold comfort to review the confident lines of the catalogue: "... well lighted class rooms, an art studio and laboratories for chemistry, physics, biology and domestic science . . . a reading room in which are found current magazines and newspapers, and a library of a thousand volumes."

Who cares, when the warmth and cheer of home are three long months away and there are no college men within fifty wretched miles?

Fortunately, "the most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see."

No arriving student can guess what comforting cushion of understanding, affection, and personal concern may await her when she appears on the college scene. The catalogue's stately list of faculty and staff gives no hint of the fun and friendliness that may lie behind it. Who of these girls coming in 1906 could guess how much time and energy and worry the board of directors, that traditionally Olympian body, had already devoted to her personal benefit? Who of them could know that Mr. Manson, for instance, would soon be calling her by name or that she would look forward to the Sundays when Bishop Randolph would preach?

Who could guess that a name standing above the italic letters "Treasurer and Business Manager" could mean so much, or that the man at the cashier's window would help in many ways other than fiscal ones? During those early



years "business manager" was a comprehensive term with almost no limit to the experience and energy it could demand. Even running a post office and managing the buildings and grounds fell to the lot of Mr. William Bland Dew who arrived two days before college opened and was to stay for his life-time. The variety of his responsibilities, aiding his natural bent for sociability, soon made him closely acquainted with everyone.

One of the girls who came on that first day, Nan Powell (now Mrs. William T. Hodges) speaks for hundreds of Sweet Briar students when she recalls Mr. Dew as "the slim man with the gray suit and soft brown hat walking up the hill to his office, frequently with his pipe in his mouth. . . . 'Ask Mr. Dew' was a frequent expression; and we asked him about everything—material for a debate, train schedules, what disposition to make of our gentlemen callers when they had to await the late train for departure, his opinion on some current happening. He was always kind, often a little amused, but ever ready to give us the benefit of his extensive reading and his wise philosophy. We enjoyed his keen humor and ready wit even when, in his teasing way, he directed them towards our youthful weaknesses and foibles. We always left him feeling happier and a little better satisfied with the world."

One of the faculty acknowledged that "No one could touch him for quick perception, and there was no better mind on the faculty. His prejudices were his playthings, never his master; and an abiding sense of justice was the basis of his character, just as his kind heart underlay his wit and keen criticism. He was chock full of tradition, and his witty talk was the delight of the place."

One memorable day in Mr. Dew's life has been colorfully related by Mr. Robert C. Glass of Lynchburg who describes the masculine associations of his life which some of the Sweet Briar girls may not have known: "Through the vales and across the creeks of Oakwood Club golf course we had played twenty-six holes and were approaching the twenty-seventh. Duffers both, we were as eager in our competition as Bobby Jones and the runner-up in the

National Open. We were tied. With that inimitable stance and that swing that had no brother on any tee in the land, Mr. Dew brought his spoon against the gleaming white pill. There was a crack, the ball sailed upward and loped downward in a long spiral. Two caddies jumped in unison, waved four arms in unison, shouted in unison: 'A hole in one!'

"Together we started toward the club house, Mr. Dew stepping jauntily, his younger companion plodding wearily. . . .

"All the gang, from the boy of forty-five to the veteran of undetermined age, kidded Mr. Dew as they kidded each other. His sun helmet in summer, and his disreputable old felt or cap in winter were the favorite butts of their gibes. They showed him no reverence. They pulled no punches. But he was always 'Mr. Dew'. Without starch, without false dignity, he commanded and received respect in his hours of play as in his hours of duty."

The entire Dew family was an addition to the zest and life of Sweet Briar. Mrs. Dew, who was Mr. Manson's younger sister, was "lovely, gracious, and beloved of everyone. She and her husband lived with laughter on their lips. They had two precious and very individual children, Polly Cary, a rosy blonde who just knew things naturally, and Billie who had started his career in art and architecture by the age of three when he used to stretch out on the floor of Miss Benedict's office and draw, using paper and pencil bestowed by the president."

In 1906 the Dews were returning to their native Virginia from several years in Idaho where Mr. Dew had been head of Indian affairs on the Nez Percé reservation. William was not born until several years later and Polly Cary was a tiny baby when they came to live in the faculty apartment before a house was built for them at the foot of Faculty Row.

By the time college opened, Miss Chapman was presiding over the apartment house. She had arrived at Sweet Briar a month before to direct the building of the laboratory desks and to purchase equipment for classes in do-



mestic science. This was a fair-sized job for a college graduate of only two months and to it, perforce, was added another. When Miss Anna Jones left there was no reason for her sister to remain, and she had been manager of the faculty apartment. Who was a more likely successor to her than Miss Chapman?

Miss Chapman was made of stern stuff and went to work with a will to provide for a table which was called upon to seat anywhere from ten to twenty diners. The nearest marketing place was Amherst, "only three miles away, but mud often came up to the hubs of a buggy, and walking was often more speedy and safe." She who had no experience at all with Negroes was called upon to manage "a cook, a couple of maids, a butler and a handy man. Furthermore," she goes on, not too woefully, "the food and the methods of cooking were quite foreign to me. The serving of two or three kinds of hot breads at one meal was a revelation to me and fried chicken for breakfast I had never experienced. I never had tasted spoon bread, Sally Lunn, beaten biscuit, batter bread or corn pone." But she learned quickly to cope with all problems—except Dr. Berkeley's carving. He was the only man living in the apartment at first and he presided over the serving at table. Miss Chapman recalls "with sadness and almost horror watching him carve T-bone steaks and serving all but the tenderloins which went out to the kitchen for the servants." She was never able to arrive at a tactful way to prevent this distressing event.

When college opened it was logical for everyone living on campus to dine in the refectory. It had been built for the college-as-planned, not for the college-as-was and the thirty-six students in a dining room which could easily accommodate three hundred would be a little lonely. It would obviously be more efficient for one staff to provide for everyone. But much as we admire logic and efficiency we often yield to other influences. In this particular case, the faculty did not fancy early morning climbs up the hill for breakfast and, illogically and inefficiently did not mind mid-day descents to and climbs from the apartment; they

wanted to eat in their home. They had even more reason to want to do this when Miss Gay Patteson's sister, Miss Mattie, came over from Richmond to run the dining room of the faculty apartment.

Miss Benedict, who was seldom discursive about matters not directly concerned with upper levels of college policy, writes in a style unusual for her about Miss Mattie who "spoiled the teachers terribly, making little brown biscuits for those that wanted little brown ones, large white biscuits for those who wanted large white ones, small white ones, and large brown ones, hard and soft ones with all the variations of size and color. She made special desserts for those who couldn't eat the regular ones, but served them the regular ones too and they never were refused."

There was no limit to the ways in which Miss Mattie helped and cared for everyone on campus. "It was Miss Mattie," says one of her friends, "who cherished the sick and homesick students; who took care of the hard-pressed faculty; and who ministered to the stranger in our gates. . . . To all she gave herself and her home, and none left her doorstep but was saner for her presence and stronger for her comfort." And another one remembers that when disaster befell her, "Miss Mattie came around—so quietly—and said 'If you need money—I have some.' She hardly knew me either. She seemed to know what to do and what to say when people were in trouble.

"She was the most gracious hostess; everyone at the faculty apartment felt like an invited guest. Miss Mattie used to stand up to carve—she was so little she couldn't have reached the top of the roast otherwise. And she served out that high stack of plates all by herself."

Little wonder that Miss Mattie all her life enjoyed the tender regard of the faculty!

Classes were to start on Thursday, September 27, 1906. On the preceding Tuesday evening this faculty which was to become so "terribly spoiled" met officially for the first time. The gathering was at 8 o'clock in the evening in Miss Benedict's office, the large ground-floor southeast room of



Sweet Briar House. The president's desk placed in front of the south windows faced a fireplace on the north and the faculty sat informally around the room in chairs facing her.

The temper of faculty meetings during the early years is described by Miss Chapman: "Naturally there were differences of opinion, but I do not recall any serious arguments. Contrasted with the complexity of college administrations today, simplicity, unanimity, and mutual respect and understanding characterized Sweet Briar's administration and faculty. . . ."

That first meeting demonstrated the personal concern of the faculty for their charges. There were no upper classmen, no student government officers, to help them greet the newcomers. Everyone was a newcomer and it was up to the faculty to help the girls get acquainted with them and with each other. Hence, the first item on the agenda that evening was the social program for the first week of school: "Thursday an informal meeting with the students, Friday a reception, Saturday a picnic in the forenoon and in the evening a special exercise to be planned by Dr. Berkeley." It was anticipated that the reception would cost about \$12 and the faculty assumed this expense—a generous move from ones whose stipends were far from princely. (No salary exceeded \$1,800 that year.)

Other considerations included the school colors. No decision could be reached between the relative beauties of a combination of rose-pink and dark green, or of yellow and white. Then they talked of seating arrangements in the dining-room, Miss Benedict proposing to make sure that the girls had "freedom from too great restraint." Dr. Harley suggested "a division of students into groups and that to each group some member of the faculty be assigned as special counsellor and friend," and thereby informally inaugurated the counseling system.

Then "it was decided to observe Saturday as rest day, and that dormitory rules should not be made till necessary."

And "the Faculty adjourned at 9 o'clock"—in all likelihood a record which still stands.

Registration day offered a task of Herculean magnitude. The girls recorded their preference for courses, then Miss Benedict manoeuvred the great and complicated puzzle of arranging classes, meticulously checking the students' stated preferences against their previous preparation and against the requirements of Sweet Briar for a college degree. The light shone from her office window until dawn as she made out schedules. "They were distributed in chapel at 8:30 next morning with no conflicts in the whole batch," one professor admiringly observed. "This was characteristic of her—she knew that they had to be ready and to be right, and that it would entail hard and concentrated work. She would not impose on anyone to help her—and no one knew enough to offer."

The job was complicated by the variety in standards of prerequisites presented by different students. Who knew what was contained in an English course in an Ohio high school, or in a second year Latin course in a Georgia school for girls? Would the quality of preparation of girls from these different schools be comparable? And what of applicants whose schools simply did not offer some of the subjects which Sweet Briar required for entrance?

The board had foreseen that these irregularities were bound to occur and had provided for sub-freshman courses to fill the gaps. But only girls who could qualify for full college work after one year of sub-freshman studies were to be admitted.

And to help applicants check the quality of their own preparation the Sweet Briar catalogue referred them to sample examinations prepared by the College Entrance Examination Board in New York City. Further, they were given detailed descriptions of the preparatory work they should have done. In English, for example, they were to have read several plays of Shakespeare, *The Sir Roger de Coverley Papers*, *The Ancient Mariner*, *Ivanhoe*, *Silas Marner*; also certain works of Tennyson, Milton, Burke,



and Macaulay. These seem familiar enough to generations of college applicants; requisites in other subjects, described in less detail, also lack any sound of quaintness. The chief difference today is that there is greater latitude, with many electives being accepted. As Miss Benedict has said, ". . . many of our girls of the first few years were high school graduates with plenty of units, who would today be classified as college students. We put them into the sub-freshman group because they did not offer four years of Latin and three years of mathematics. . . . We leaned over backward in regard to our requirements both for admission to the college work and for graduation."

As for their college studies, they chose one of six four-year programs which were fairly rigidly prescribed, with electives permitted only in the junior and senior years, one in each. Two years of philosophy were required of all students, and languages, especially German, received greater emphasis than they do today.

A look at the content of courses is interesting. In the fifty years that have elapsed since that first set of requirements for graduation was made out, history, for instance, is a subject which has widened, deepened, ramified multiplied and otherwise complicated itself. The students of 1906 had no causes of two world wars to inquire into, nor all the well documented accounts of battles large and small to read; the Orient was almost unknown, and Latin America seemed unimportant; the nature of fascism and communism did not have to be considered and everyone knew what democracy meant. Modern European history was dealt with "from the Renaissance to the present time" in one semester; likewise, "Advanced American History." And psychology was taken care of in half a year by Miss Benedict; it was looked upon "as a basis for the further study of philosophy." The courses in natural sciences seem not to have been too taxing—relatively speaking; one advanced course in chemistry was optimistically entitled "Inclusive Chemistry" and dealt with "the applications of chemistry to the arts and manufactures."

But such limitations were of course as much the limita-

tions of the era as of the infant college. The faculty was competent and it had no need to be large at first because there was as yet no one to enroll in most of the advanced classes. The foundations of knowledge and methods offered by Sweet Briar stood up well against later tests when students transferred or went on to graduate school. The college had its share of difficulties but in general they were not academic ones.

The chief scholastic trouble then was in getting students who were adequately prepared for the calibre of work the college had to offer. One sample problem of admission was this: the college had set 70 as the passing numerical grade; what should be done with applicants from preparatory schools whose passing grade was 60? It was decided that if the school were in good standing its passing students might be admitted; the real trouble lay with applicants from schools not known to the college staff—which is still a problem, but much less so with the present greater standardization of secondary schools and more available ratings on them.

As always, some students found college work a bit too challenging and, as always, petitions to change schedules were often submitted. The most commonly stated cause for wishing to drop a course was "eye-strain" which was experienced in everything from domestic science to mathematics. One girl petitioning to drop geometry had found that "her many studies were interfering with her daily exercise" and another offered to substitute a three-hour course for the one-hour hygiene course in which she found the lectures "constitutionally unbearable."

In general, however, the students seem to have found the college work to be what they wanted and expected. Only one girl could not stand the pace. She "never ceased weeping from homesickness until she was finally sent home. She was utterly helpless," writes Miss Chapman, "never having even laced her own shoes. In those days we wore high laced ones; she had always had a Negro mammy to wait on her every move and she could not bring her mammy to college."



No, no Sweet Briar girl has ever brought a servant to school with her. If people have not precisely imagined Sweet Briar girls with an attending shoe-lacer at hand, there has at least been a vague impression abroad that Sweet Briar was an elegant school where girls met for tea in the afternoon on the green lawns, wearing floaty chiffons and floppy hats.

These dreamlike notions may in part be laid to the name "Sweet Briar," in part to the tradition of the old plantation days—and perhaps to the fact that peacocks actually did step proudly among the boxwoods in the early years. Members of the board pondered the possibilities of trouble with that name. It arose soon, in a minor way. At a meeting of college presidents Miss Benedict had to listen to another president exclaim to her, "What a name! I would as soon have a diploma from Lily-of-the-Valley College!" Compensation came when Miss Benedict was introduced to Bryn Mawr's President M. Carey Thomas who said, "Sweet Briar? What a beautiful name!"

In spite of the fact that Miss Indie had wished it to be called "Sweet Briar Institute," legal dispensation was received (in 1927) to use "College" for the less endearing title, "Institute," and the board, even before 1906, thought a way might be found to avoid the non-academic implications of a name like Sweet Briar. "Williams College" would have been logical but a group of men in Massachusetts would have justifiably objected; likewise, "Amherst College." Miss Benedict herself, "feeling that the name might not represent us satisfactorily . . . once recommended to the Board . . . 'Fletcher College'. . . . But no one connected with the college really wanted another name and it was not very long until we stopped thinking about it and knew that it would be Sweet Briar forever."

The faculty's decision not to create rules until it became clear what rules were needed gave the students a chance to act on their own initiative. By the end of three weeks of school it became evident that some regulation of noise in the dormitories and of promptness at meals and else-

where was needed. The students submitted to the faculty a most solemn petition: "Believing there is dignity and honor in student government we desire individual and community responsibility for the conduct of the students in matters not strictly academic." Their request pertained to the above-mentioned matters and added a request for the "right to control outdoor exercise of the students" and for permission to "extend our power as occasion arises and we prove worthy to be vested with greater power and authority."

The faculty willingly acquiesced and asked for a constitution to be submitted for its approval. By October 23 the students "sitting in general assembly" had elected officers and framed some purposes, most of which revolved around the maintenance of quiet, promptness, and regular exercise. Each student was required to "register one hour's daily exercise or be excused by the doctor"; failure either to exercise or to make a weekly report of exercise carried a fine of twenty-five cents. The use of chafing dishes was prohibited on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday nights and the marring of school furniture was emphatically discouraged. But a student was permitted to be late to three meals each week and—of all things!—she could entertain men in her room. A suite of two bedrooms with study between was assigned to every two girls, and men were permitted to visit in the study—provided that a chaperone was present and permission of the president of the college was given in writing.

Ina Larkins was elected president; Lillian Lloyd (the First Student), vice-president; Helen Schulte, secretary; and Bessie Jackson, treasurer. It was a prompt and orderly beginning for an organization which would as the years passed take on greater and greater responsibilities.

At the same time that student government was requested there was a move to form a secret society. Friends who belonged to sororities in other colleges had written to ask some Sweet Briar girls to form a chapter of a national sorority. The faculty discussed this at length; two motions were made which were, after much talk, withdrawn; finally



a committee was appointed "to instill into the minds of the students the idea of a general literary and dramatic society." A month later the faculty received a petition from students to organize a literary and dramatic society—for which permission was graciously granted.

The girls entered into their work with considerable zeal and before the first month was over a report was brought to a faculty meeting "that students felt they did not have sufficient time to prepare their lessons"—an approximately normal situation for a good college. Those students did have a shorter working day than the girls of the present have; the power was shut off at 10 o'clock and so there was no question of studying later. However, as somehow happens, there was a diminution of assiduousness as time went by, and a suggestion cropped up in faculty meeting that the library should not be opened at night so as to "prevent girls from spending too much time reading periodicals." The library which had to be monitored by faculty (who bridled a bit—it was "a loss of dignity as well as time") was open only an hour and a half in the late afternoon and slightly longer in the evening, closing at 9 o'clock.

The busy faculty also had the responsibility of conducting chapel unless there were a visiting clergyman or member of the board on campus. At the end of dinner in the refectory, signalled by Miss Benedict rising from her chair, there would be some fifteen minutes of dancing among the students, of chatting among the faculty. Then all would go over to Academic for a brief vesper service in the large room at the east end of the building. "It was an easy matter to check absences from chapel, since there were so few students. No one ever thought of cutting chapel," observes Miss Chapman—except, apparently, the faculty, the ones sitting cosily around Miss Mattie's well-laid board down the hill. After a few months of trudging unwillingly up that hill after dinner they bethought themselves that the Amherst students were deprived of chapel attendance when it was held in the evening, so they had the hour shifted to noon.

But let no one think that if the teachers wanted a while of ease and conversation after dinner they did not deserve it. The faculty members who came in the first years were as much the founders of Sweet Briar as anyone and they gave generously of themselves—for all sorts of things. The president had selected them primarily to offer the academic training that any first-class college would require, and secondly to "fit into the rural and limited life of Sweet Briar and be contented." To be contented, they had to enter with a whole soul into all the exertions required of an unfinished organization, and this they did.

Besides their full schedule of classes the science teachers had the added burden of setting up new equipment (it was second semester before the stoves and sinks were ready for classes in cooking), and the others had to use their ingenuity in getting around the fact that the library was still fairly limited. They had chapel to lead, the library to tend, and nearly every social event to participate in, as well as a good deal of chaperoning to do.

The campus, which contained some three thousand acres, offered possibilities for 'possum hunts and horse-back rides, picnics and walks, and teachers and students entered into them together. Miss Benedict remembers "climbing through the woods about Monument Hill with the girls at sunset, and staying with them on into the moon-lit night—surrounded by a peaceful circle of yuccas." There were also dances, a privilege not unanimously approved in the neighborhood, as other women's colleges in the area had not yet come to such entertainment. And gentlemen callers were permitted on weekends.

Particularly delightful were expeditions into Lynchburg, which was no harder to reach than Amherst in those days. By leaving on the train after an early lunch and returning on the late afternoon train it was possible to have two and a half hours' shopping, ending with a soda at Craighill & Jones. In Lynchburg the girls looked forward to being greeted at the station by a super red-cap named Ernest, a young colored boy who knew them all by name. Purchases made during the afternoon could be



sent to the station in care of Ernest who would see that all of them got on the train in the hands of their proper owners. (When Sweet Briar finally published a yearbook in 1910 Ernest was honored with a full page to himself, smile, uniform and all.)

Lynchburg was something of a musical center at that time and there were often "box parties" of Briarites at minstrels, operas or plays. There was of course always a faculty member on excursions so far afield. The camaraderie of student and professor was pleasant, and those who hark back to early days can seldom refrain from referring, sooner or later, to "a big family." Miss Benedict, besides knowing every girl's schedule and being thoroughly familiar with her academic achievements and difficulties, had also in her quiet way a surprisingly intimate knowledge of them individually. This was true in such striking degree that Dr. Rollins was once moved to tell her that she seemed to know by instinct what each one did and even thought, and that in this respect she reminded him of Ignatius Loyola, who was said even to know how many fleas bit each brother at night.

When Christmas vacation came it was Miss Benedict who went down to the station with the girls to wait for the early afternoon train. (No one doubted that there would be a wait; on one banner day when a train went through on the minute at which it was scheduled, campus-wide amazement was quickly dispelled by the news that it was "yesterday's train.") On this particular afternoon "we sat in the bus," says Miss Benedict, "hoping to hear a train whistle and often got out and put our ears to the track—a very common performance at Sweet Briar station during the early years. But the afternoon wore away without a single toot or vibration of the rails. We watched the sun go down—a cheerful group we were, singing and chatting and laughing. The sun was just setting when a train whistle sounded from the direction of Monroe. As Amherst was more of a stop than Sweet Briar then, we all went on the northbound train to Amherst where the southbound girls and I got off to find out more about their

train. It came along in a half-hour and I saw the last girl off for home, but could not go myself because this train would not stop at Sweet Briar. It was getting too dark to walk, so I went to a livery stable and got a horse which I mounted side saddle in my best broadcloth suit. The horse neither wanted to leave his stable nor to walk through the fluid red mud which separated us from Sweet Briar but I did at last get him on the road. Before we reached our good Sweet Briar road he had waded two miles through the mud and my dark blue broadcloth suit was ruined. I never wore it again."

That winter and the spring of 1907 went on at a placid gait. Once the cooking facilities were functioning in the domestic science department, savory odors used to lure Miss Benedict to investigate and "once she was inside the door the students would pounce upon her to sample their efforts"—a pleasant experience for all. Along in March, the students realized that they had made no arrangements to record this historic year and petitioned for permission to publish an annual. The faculty saw that this would mean even more frantic scurrying than it usually does, for there were no ties established with printers and photographers, no one familiar with procedure in general, so they said "no" to the proposition, gently but firmly.

Complaints of food in the refectory grew to a magnitude where they exceeded what may normally be expected from boarders who have no choice in their menu. The manager of the refectory was relieved of her duties and another found who perhaps did better, but it was not until the third year that a really memorable dietitian came, Miss Fannie Carroll, "a petite, erect, white-haired little lady, a true Virginian of an old family, who had the personal qualities which made her a successful manager although she had missed getting any formal training in that line."

Meals were dignified by the presence of Miss Benedict who walked over three times a day from Sweet Briar House and was never late. Her table was set against the center of the west wall and the faculty residents of the dormitories



joined her there. Occasional college visitors would vary the personnel of that table. Miss Benedict's father, by then retired from the faculty of the University of Cincinnati, was one of the most welcome and most interesting. At another time it was her mother, a lady who had not only raised her own six children but had also found time to take initiative as far back as 1879 in establishing kindergartens in Cincinnati; she had also been active in the Ohio State Federation of Women's Clubs. The story of the Williams family of Sweet Briar captured her imagination and she wrote two poems about them which Miss Benedict was proud to quote in one of her commencement addresses.

Miss Benedict herself was strongly attracted by the existing reminders of the Williamses. Miss Indie's lace, jewelry, and silverware were not sold until 1907 so she had a chance to see them as well as to read and appreciate a sample of Henry Williams's correspondence with his wife. And "Daisy's horse was still here when we came," she said. "He roamed stiffly around the place. He didn't sleep very well—I've seen him late at night in the moonlight stalking about. . . ."

Miss Benedict had a great feeling for the plantation. Sweet Briar House itself was for her "a storehouse from which we drew materially and spiritually. The house and grounds were just right for the social life . . . and the beauty and harmony of all our surroundings seemed to emanate from the home . . . In coming into this home, I think we all felt, I know I did, that we had been graciously invited to come by the persons to whom it had belonged. We had been asked to take it over in trust for the realization of the high purposes of the Founders. They had left expectations which we were to live up to." And the other buildings "seemed to have grown out of the Sweet Briar domain and were a part of it, nurtured by it . . . From the soil came the bricks . . . from the farm the supplies for our table . . . from the springs and wells on and under the earth came our water."

Even as late as 1919 there was considerable evidence

of the old plantation: "Negro cabins still stood on Elijah's Road and back of Sweet Briar House towards the lake. Here and there over the campus were old barns and tobacco sheds with hand hewn logs and shingles and wooden pegs for nails. You could trace the highway into the plantation down Sunset Road towards the lake where it was lost when the lake was made, but it could be found again in the woods towards Amherst by the old cherry trees which once bordered it."

At the end of the first session of the college the principal clouds on the horizon were more difficulties with the physical plant and with finances. The reservoir on Monument Hill had been so high that water running down to the college had come under such pressure that it had burst pipes; the stock barn and tool house burned in the spring; the contractor who had worked on the dam sued for more than \$2,000; and by June it was necessary to sell \$25,000 worth of securities to meet expenses and payments on loans.

The girls were soon to show concern and real responsibility whenever fortune frowned on their college, but not just yet; they were all freshmen. They were able to finish the year light-heartedly with three days of closing exercises scheduled originally to include on Monday, a play; Tuesday, a lecture and dance; Wednesday, simple final exercises. This plan was amended to read, in typical Sweet Briar fashion: "Monday, faculty and students join in planting shrubbery."



## CHAPTER IV

# *Lights and Shadows*

1907-1916

THE FIRST YEAR of Sweet Briar College had its golden quality, a quality peculiar to successful beginnings and never quite present at later and more complex stages of an enterprise.

The board of directors had the satisfaction of seeing its six years of preparatory labor culminate in the assemblage on an unusually beautiful campus of a faculty and student body under a presiding officer of unquestioned superiority. They were all young people, "not a gray hair or a bald head on the faculty"; the thirty-one-year-old president was the youngest the college has ever had. Faculty and students alike were persons of good will, enjoying and sharing the stimulus of the new and the excitement of pioneering.

Beneath these lighter bonds were also qualities which endured through the formative years, qualities that boded well for the temper of the new college. Miss Connie Guion who arrived in 1908 to teach chemistry reveals both in her own person and in reminiscences of her Sweet Briar years some of the strengths which were to enable the little college to withstand future storms.

Miss Guion came to Sweet Briar with some misgiving. Her confidence in the character of education offered in the south at that time had received a serious blow when after graduation from a North Carolina high school she had found it necessary to spend two more years in a preparatory school before she could be admitted to Wellesley College. As she was setting out for Virginia there was a question in her mind whether, after all, she should have given up her instructorship at Vassar to return to the south. Her chief encouragement for accepting the invitation to Sweet Briar had come from Vassar classmates of

## LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

Miss Benedict who had convinced Miss Guion that with such a president the new college could not fail to hold an interesting challenge.

Miss Benedict's friends had also indicated that her manner was one of extreme reserve, almost severity. So it was with some hesitation that Miss Guion entered the foyer of the old Manhattan Hotel one day in 1908 for an interview with the president of Sweet Briar; in her own words, "I was shaking in my boots." In a few minutes Miss Benedict with her simple and direct approach had made a firm friend of Miss Guion. "She seemed to know all about me and what I wanted," comments Miss Guion. "She immediately described Sweet Briar and all of its worst features, disadvantages, and small salary. Then she launched into her plans and ideas for the college with unusual enthusiasm. At the end, she offered me a position as instructor in chemistry and physics. . . .

"In this first interview I was struck by the way in which Miss Benedict had investigated me. She had my history in detail: family, preparatory school, college, and Vassar. She came prepared to make a decision provided I met her requirements. This was characteristic of her; she always went ready to meet a problem with information, with forethought and probable outcome clearly in mind."

Miss Guion was pleased not only with Sweet Briar's president but with its students also. She testifies that she was "surprised at the attitude of even the youngest girls, girls who seemed all social foam, pleasure-bound for W. and L. [Washington and Lee University at Lexington, Virginia]. I soon realized that the criterion for every proposition, be it for academic work or a May Day Dance, was 'Is it best for the college?' Everywhere I was conscious of a spirit of ownership or a better word is partnership, a spirit of jealousy for this growing young college. And the strangest part . . . only a handful of the student body were actually of college standing. . . . But a girl's zeal for the college was not measured by her knowledge of arts and sciences. . . ."

Others have commented similarly. Miss Benedict's sister



Agnes visited Sweet Briar in the spring of 1908 with several of her Vassar classmates. They were invited to bring information on student activities at Vassar, especially on student government. Looking back at this visit Miss Agnes Benedict's "one impression which stood out more strongly than any other . . . was the sense of maturity of those girls. Happy though they were, young though they were, they were responsible. They were laying foundations, pioneering, helping to mold an institution. We had our traditions; they were making theirs—and the process was making women of them."

One of the girls who accompanied her on the visit paid her tribute to Sweet Briar by returning the next fall as a student, the first "transfer."

The faculty was increasing each year and it was being strengthened by men and women who were not only instructors of high calibre but who had caught this spirit of proprietorship and pride, persons whose loyalties to the emerging college prevented them from accepting calls to other places, sometimes staying at considerable financial sacrifice.

In 1907 came Miss Sparrow. There are attestations of her Cornell professors that Caroline Lambert Sparrow was "a woman of brilliant parts and of excellent training" and "one of the most talented of all the hundreds of graduates of this college."

Miss Sparrow gave her entire professional life to Sweet Briar. Her quick mind, thoroughly original and facile humor, her individual mannerisms endeared her alike to those who knew her well and those who only knew her casually. One of her colleagues has written an apt sentence which recalls a familiar image in the minds of many: "Her teetering gait, her habit of standing on the very edge of the platform as she lectured, almost but never quite falling off, and her gesture of pushing her large figure-eight top-knot forward were characteristics that lent themselves to student imitation on all occasions, but she knew that the students liked her and was never offended."

One of her students, Jane Guignard, '23 (Mrs. Broadus Thompson), wrote appreciatively of Miss Sparrow at the time of her retirement in 1942: "She did not cudgel the unawakened or reluctant brain but beckoned to it down enticing by-paths of learning, making one feel a blood kinship with all the human race through the troublous ages, making Charlemagne or Attila the Hun real as a small-town neighbor. . . . It was fun to watch her, poised over an idea like a hummingbird over a flower, extracting the substance from it delicately but thoroughly. It has been well said that the wise person has a serious attitude towards life but a light approach. Nothing is more characteristic of Miss Sparrow."

In the person of Miss Sparrow the new college now had a history department. Miss Sparrow's own description of the beginning of her teaching career at Sweet Briar is revealing: "That first day I went to the library on the first floor of the Academic Building. The books, what there were of them, were good. The windows of the room went down to the floor and it had the hospitable look of a gentleman's private library. I never saw a better satisfied looking set of books."

"Ninety students appeared for registration that year and a good half of them appeared in my freshman class. With an atlas and Robinson's *History of Western Europe* and its source book, we began that very day to learn the meaning of sources of history. I have wondered since if those rather soft talking children were anything like as frightened as I was."

She easily kept their interest and was so convincing that once when she was cut short by the bell during a lecture on Mohammed's achievements for his people, one earnest girl came up and said, "Miss Sparrow, I want to know very much—are you a Mohammedan?" Miss Sparrow said that she was not and that she could prove it next day when she brought out the weaknesses and failures of Mohammedanism.

By the second year her pupils, "now sophisticated sophomores, splashed gloriously through the period of the



Renaissance and the Reformation." Miss Sparrow dealt so tactfully with the role of the Roman Church in the Reformation that one of the Roman Catholic students paid her a great tribute: "I think you are very broadminded for a Protestant."

The year 1908 brought not only Miss Guion but Miss Virginia McLaws who came to recondition the attitude toward art. Professor de Launay, distracted by the loss of his wife, had so discouraged an interest in art that the subject was allowed to lie fallow for a year while intellectual curiosity for it regenerated itself. Miss McLaws was warmly received into the faculty, and her courses were enjoyed by Sweet Briar girls throughout her long teaching career. Also in 1908 the college called a clergyman who lived at Sweet Briar as a chaplain and professor of biblical literature, Wallace Eugene Rollins, whose talents and character were well known to Bishop Randolph. Mr. Rollins had not only served in the bishop's Virginia diocese as rector of churches at Covington and Christiansburg, but he had become a close friend of the bishop's when he accompanied him on visits through the small towns of the diocese.

Mr. Rollins came from North Carolina where he had graduated from the University and he was also a graduate of the Yale Divinity School. At Sweet Briar Mr. Rollins made a permanent mark in the hearts of his students and his congregation. His musical wife was also on the faculty and swelled the music department to four. Mr. Rollins left Sweet Briar in 1913 to teach ecclesiastical history at the Episcopal Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia, where he later became dean. During his twenty-seven years there he visited Sweet Briar many times and often filled the pulpit; when he retired in 1940 he came back to stay. He had lost his wife and in 1946 his friends were greatly pleased when he married Sweet Briar's professor of religion and chairman of the department which he had founded, Miss Marion Benedict (not related to Miss Mary Benedict).

Dr. Rollins, an articulate and amusing story-teller, en-

joys reminiscing about early Sweet Briar. Recalling the emotional turbulence that the question of suffrage for women was then generating he tells of a visit to Sweet Briar of Miss Mary Johnston, a crusader for women's rights: "Speaking to the faculty Miss Johnston began by describing graphically all the evils of our American civilization and then she traced each terrible condition back to the exclusive male franchise. There were only four men in the group and as she described each awful condition she would point her scornful finger at me or Mr. Humphreys, Mr. Dew or Mr. Worthington [who came in 1909 to teach French], a performance which was more or less repeated later by Mrs. Philip Snowden, the beautiful and eloquent wife of the English labor leader who spoke to the whole student body." Those ladies could hardly have done worse than to attempt to win an audience by choosing that row of warmly regarded gentlemen as horrible examples of man-kind. Neither of them succeeded in rocking the campus with their arguments.

One lady, however, whose influence on the campus has been both diverse and lasting is Miss Guion. The specific problems of the pioneer are interesting and, through Miss Guion's eyes, amusing. Her recollection of the first obstacle that confronted her at Sweet Briar reveals much about the characters of the new chemistry instructor and the young president. Miss Guion had reported to Miss Benedict that the equipment in the chemistry laboratory was inadequate and the desk provided was eight inches too high for girls to use. "Miss Benedict asked me what I proposed should be done and I asked that sinks, water supply, and shelves be installed and the desk chopped off eight inches. She asked for drawings and cost.

"I was both ignorant and inept at making drawings and getting estimates. After I sweated over the job most of two or three nights, I looked up late one night to see her standing in the laboratory door, inquiring about my progress as casually as if it were noon instead of midnight. She looked at my efforts and suggested that perhaps she could



help. She asked in detail what I had in mind and shortly produced plans accurately drawn to scale. After investigation she decided that the shelves and sinks should be built as I wanted them. But Mr. Heald, representing the executive committee of the board, would not hear of remodeling the desk; he thought it unnecessary and too expensive."

Miss Guion then offered to saw the bottom of the desk off herself. Miss Benedict's reply was, typically, "Use your own judgment." Miss Guion consulted with Mr. Watts, the college carpenter, who obligingly drew lines and angles to guide her and lent her his saws. "On Friday," said Miss Guion, "I started the job and sawed till late at night, by the light of a kerosene lamp after the power went off at 10 o'clock. Next day and night I continued the job. About midnight Saturday Miss Benedict and Mr. Heald appeared in the laboratory as I was struggling to turn the table upright. Mr. Heald rushed over to help while Miss Benedict stood in the background with a broad grin on her face.

"Before she left the lab she had shown Mr. Heald her drawings of my design for rehabilitating the table top, drawers and doors. He was convinced that the plan was good and gave orders for Mr. Watts to do the job.

"This is an example of how Miss Benedict worked and why the trustees found her judgment good. Mr. Heald had never been in the laboratory before but after that night he took charge of reconstruction of the desk, had lead sinks made and all the rest. Two years later he had a desk made according to the design used for the new laboratory at Vassar."

Miss Guion brought her initiative and energy to various fields. She found the semi-weekly visits of the representative of J. P. Bell's book store in Lynchburg a poor substitute for a bookshop. After she had made her students comfortable at their chemistry desk she sought Miss Benedict's permission to open a bookshop. This was readily granted, a room was set aside and with the help of Miss Marion Peele, Miss Benedict's secretary, orders for books

could be received for a short time at noon each day. All orders were paid in advance as there was no working capital.

The next year, in 1909, an office on the ground floor of Academic became the bookshop, with shelves around its walls and a hinged counter across the door. The little shop was open briefly three times a day. Miss Guion arranged for J. P. Bell to make for the shop the first Sweet Briar postcards and she promoted a confectionery sideline by purchasing five dollars' worth of chocolate almonds which were sold by the piece because there were no scales to weigh them. As candy sales boomed, the store branched into a sale of crackers—by the dozen. And business was facilitated that year by requiring of each student a twenty dollar deposit.

In 1910 expansion continued. The shop moved into the basement of Randolph, one of the new dormitories, and was enhanced by the gift of a display counter from Harris-Woodson, the candy wholesalers. Stationery and supplies were added and the first Sweet Briar calendar was a popular article for sale. Miss McLaws was drafted as a part time storekeeper and several students became paid helpers, one earning her full tuition. "By the end of the year," Miss Guion asserts, "the shop achieved full professional standing when a spring-control cash drawer was added."

Miss Guion's talents were not limited to science, carpentry, and business. She also furnished the impetus to form a dramatics group and directed the first plays. Then, after five years at Sweet Briar, she left to enter medical school. Today, although she is a busy member of the faculty of the Medical College of Cornell University and maintains a private practice also, she still gives generously of her time and ability and enthusiasm for Sweet Briar as a member of its board of overseers. She has been chairman of the development committee since 1954.

Miss Guion observed that through the personal acquaintance of the Sweet Briar instructors with members of the college faculties from which they came "Sweet Briar be-



came a subject of interest in the college world and her progress was watched." The tie with Vassar was especially close and in 1909 another young woman came down from Poughkeepsie. This was Miss Eugenie Morenus who was to teach mathematics and Latin. Miss Morenus had known Dr. Harley at Vassar and, as a substitute teacher during her graduate studies, had taught Miss Benedict's sister Agnes who reported that she was well liked and a good teacher.

Miss Morenus landed in Boston at the end of a summer in Europe and had to go to Sweet Briar without her trunk. She felt shy about going to the reception in Sweet Briar House in the same shirt waist and skirt she had worn when she left the boat, but once at the party she found everyone so friendly that she forgot her disheveled appearance. In fact, she liked Sweet Briar so well and was so favorably impressed with Miss Benedict's way of running it that she stayed for thirty-seven years, several times refusing offers to go elsewhere at better salaries. She entered wholeheartedly into Sweet Briar life. She enrolled in one of Miss Chapman's cooking classes (and still receives Christmas cards from the girl who was her partner). She liked photography and many of the early yearbooks would be sorely depleted if all the pictures taken by her were removed. She loved the out-of-doors and gladly helped the president to guard swimmers in the lake; they took turns sitting by watchfully in a rowboat.

But horseback riding was her chief joy. She had her own horse, "October"—familiarily known as Toby—who became one of the best known figures on campus. During spring vacation Miss Morenus would sometimes take girls for ten-day rides to the Peaks of Otter, Apple Orchard Mountain, Natural Bridge, and to Bellevue near Bedford. Another trip she remembers with particular pleasure was in 1911 when Mr. Martindale, the farm manager, took her and three other faculty ladies on a four-day trip with him to collect the rents from outlying farms. Some of the places they went were accessible only on foot or horseback and of

course there were no inns, so they stayed in a different farmhouse each night.

Mr. Martindale had arrived only a few months before Miss Morenus and he was another who could not bring himself to leave Sweet Briar—although he tried once, but after fourteen years away he came back to be the postmaster. When Mr. Martindale arrived in the spring of 1908 one of his first jobs was to supervise the ten men who were reconstructing the dairy and horse barns which had just burned. Brick for them was being baked in the kilns left from the construction of the larger college buildings, and the huge fires in them had to be kept going constantly. Four hundred cords of wood were cut for this purpose, and more than once Mr. Martindale was the man who had to spend up to twenty hours tending the fires without a break.

The trees in the orchard, set out at the behest of Dr. McBryde were still no larger than Mr. Martindale's thumb, and the dairy herd was infected with tuberculosis. He made a trip to New York to buy cattle, and after his first year the Sweet Briar farm was able to supply the whole college with milk. This is still true and students may walk to the dairy and drink their fill. During Mr. Martindale's regime pork and lamb for the college tables were also supplied entirely from the farm. In those days the farm was still under the administration of the president, and the farmer had many duties directly connected with the college. Miss Guion says, "Mr. Martindale was indispensable every day from dark to dawn—in the house, in the stables, on the farm, at the trains, on trips, or on fox hunts."

His great love was horses. In his thirteen years as farm manager there was, according to his own assertion, never a day when he was not on a horse. He owned two or three of his own mounts and belonged to the Oak Ridge Hunt Club of Lynchburg. At college he was an enthusiastic arranger of drag hunts and fox hunts for the girls, and even those students who never rode thrilled to the excite-



ment on Thanksgiving morning when, in the frosty air, the traditional hunt assembled on campus, with restless hounds darting among horses bearing the pinkcoated riders.

Such events as were to become traditions, and new organizations among the students were cautiously admitted, a few each year, by a faculty who knew to what excessive expenditures of energy the enthusiasms of youth can lead. In 1907-1908 the faculty limited innovations to two of their own: a teahouse and a series of lectures and concerts.

The first students had satisfied their hunger and thirst from the open counters of the old commissary, a remnant of plantation days when flies knew no curbs. The lack of hygiene so disturbed Dr. Harley that she stimulated the faculty to provide something better. Miss Chapman saw possibilities in the little building by the side of Sweet Briar House which had served as an office for the Fletchers and Williamses, where in Daisy's time the Scotsman who came to shear the sheep was put up. With plates and cups borrowed from the refectory, a little furniture, and an old stove, the faculty established a teahouse open for business two afternoons each week.

If it lacked the amenities of the Palm Room at the Plaza, it enjoyed a cozy atmosphere, appreciative customers and an unusually well-educated staff. The faculty did the work and provided the food—tea with sandwiches and cookies, and "cakes and ale" as the students liked to designate it, adding that this signified "home-made cakes and unimpeachable ginger-ale." Even with the normal prices charged they made money and the next year were able to employ as manager Miss Fannie Carroll, who soon had to hire a maid to help her. Business was so good that according to a student report "in one year there were 215 birthdays, each with cake and candle, among the 192 students." Enough money was accumulated to set sums aside for scholarships, a practice which was continued for many years.

The lecture and concert series inaugurated by the faculty was supported by two-dollar contributions from each of them and from parents of students. Seeking programs of "undoubted merit" they brought to campus that year, among other attractions, the Schubert String Quartette of Boston, a gentleman who read "The Merry Wives of Windsor," and a clergyman who lectured on "The Guises." During the next few years the college heard such men as John Cowper Powys, Dr. Hugh Black, and Professor Bliss Perry.

This was the beginning of a feature of Sweet Briar's college year which has always been an important adjunct to scheduled classes. Most Friday evenings later on were taken up with outstanding speakers and performers. One of the pleasant by-products of the lecture and concert series has been its effect of providing a binding tie for the whole community. Friends who live nearby are welcomed and the feeling of solidarity, of the whole group being enlightened or entertained together, is an experience which alumnae who have transferred or graduated into larger colleges and universities have keenly missed.

It is safe to say that no one connected with Sweet Briar has attended as many programs at the college as has one family of valued neighbors. These are the Walkers who have been involved with Sweet Briar in many ways—and Miss Ruby Walker has attended every commencement in the history of the college. Where neighbors of any sort were few and far between, it was rare good fortune to have nearby a family so spirited, so well-traveled, well-read—and so large.

The head of the family was Dr. George Edward Walker, a physician and research chemist. He and his wife had adventurously moved from England to Canada with their six children, when Dr. Walker was advised to leave England on account of severe arthritis. They went to western Manitoba completing the last miles of the trip in a covered wagon. Dr. Walker with great difficulty made a sod dug-out to shelter his family until the log-house could be built



—a matter of five months. Dr. Walker's ministrations to sick Indians protected them from raids of the Blackfoot Tribe, but wolves, who were not to be appeased, often stole food from them, and even took Dr. Walker's boots. In their years in Manitoba they prospered, produced three more children, organized a family orchestra, and gave their present names to several towns: Burnt Stump, Bison Head, Wolf Run.

The rugged life in Canada was followed by twelve mellow years in Florida; then Dr. and Mrs. Walker decided they needed a brisker climate. With nostalgic thoughts of their native England they sent their son Will to prospect in Virginia. He was on a train en route to Lynchburg when beautiful green hills caught his eye; a little station flashed by and his inquiry to the conductor brought the answer, "That was Sweet Briar." His first visit to a real estate agent in Lynchburg produced pictures of an estate which had recently come on the market: Mount St. Angelo. When the agent said it was located at Sweet Briar a sale was quickly made.

Paths between St. Angelo and Sweet Briar were soon worn wide and bare over the low hills of green pasture land. A girl walking over for tea with the Walkers might have felt herself to be a heroine of a Hardy or Brontë novel. If the landscape was only mildly British, the reception at the end of the walk was surely not. Even Miss Ruby who had left England at the age of one never let the south depress the crispness in her speech.

One of the annual college festivities for many years was a party at the Walkers' on Thanksgiving night when the whole of Sweet Briar ate and sang around a huge bonfire. And when Violet Walker was married, the event was noted on the Sweet Briar calendar, for the entire college was invited to the reception.

The hospitable Walkers were in their turn warmly greeted on their excursions to campus. Mrs. Walker and her sister, "Aunt Kitty," who had been with the family in all its travels, brought a quaint charm and dignified sweetness wherever they went, two small ladies in high-

necked dresses and, unfailingly, on Mrs. Walker's head a little lace cap.

Dr. Walker died in 1920 and "Dr. Will" became head of the family. He was acquainted with everyone on campus, for he supplied transportation in a manner such as only a neighbor could, because the intermittent needs of the college would never have supported a full-time taxi. He met trains and took parties on special trips to Lynchburg or other nearby towns. He raised blooded stock which "paraded solemnly behind him whenever he appeared in their pasture, and took prizes at all the fairs." He was active in many Amherst affairs: chairman of Red Cross, treasurer of the Public Health Committee, bank director, president of the Amherst Fair Association, and vestryman at the Ascension Church until his death in 1953.

Miss Ruby also knew the whole college. During her first year at St. Angelo she bent her energies and interests into making a success of the new teashop. With no recompense other than the gratitude of Sweet Briar's residents, she baked most of the cakes that were sold in the shop. Sometimes Aunt Kitty helped her and, at the peak of their production, they once baked seventeen cakes in a day; it almost ruined permanently Miss Ruby's taste for cake.

In 1918 Miss Ruby was officially added to the college family when she became manager of the bookshop. "Miss Winifred," her younger sister, who lived for some years in England, later became a well-known, friendly figure working there with Miss Ruby. And more recently their brother, "Mr. Ted," moved back to Sweet Briar from the north and further cemented ties between family and college by marrying one of the staff.

The college annual of 1918 was dedicated to the Walker family and in 1934 the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award was bestowed upon Miss Ruby who was recognized as having made herself "indispensable in and out of the bookshop." Such formal recognitions are mere punctuations in the continuing affection and interest which residents of



the campus, the transients and the permanent, take in the Walker family.

When St. Angelo was sold to the Walkers in 1909 the board of directors as well as the college residents had reason to rejoice. They were relieved of the responsibility of a farm which had continually lost money and their capital was replenished by a good sum. They needed every dollar of it.

Miss Indie's half million dollars which was to have supplied ample endowment, even after the erection of necessary buildings, was almost gone. Stocks had been depressed; securities were sold at loss and such income as had been derived was reduced to almost nothing. Gone were the days when the Williams estate brought in nearly \$40,000 annually. In 1908 \$24,000 was needed as payment on loans and \$10,000 was needed for current bills. A new dormitory was urgently needed to accommodate more students whose fees would then provide additional income for the treasury. The board ruefully noted that "the school was originally designed upon an expensive plan and cannot be run as a cheap school."

They were rueful as regarded their immediate situation. But in 1951 Miss Benedict writing in retrospect endorsed the intention of Dr. McBryde and his colleagues who planned Sweet Briar from the beginning with an eye on its future. "We realized," she wrote, "that the early spending of money on our material plant was directed toward carrying out a large plan allowing for development in many directions. A more limited use of the funds then might have seemed more economical at the time, but it might have been . . . crippling to us now."

The executive committee, "carefully and anxiously considering the matter," sought loans in four states. The best offer they could find was 7¾% in Philadelphia but unfortunately their collateral was not acceptable. Stocks were sold. The Lynchburg Bank lent \$10,000—on the strength of Mr. Manson's signature, which he more than once gave for Sweet Briar.

Efforts were made to build up endowment, heartbreaking efforts. Eugenia Griffin, '10 (Mrs. Charles R. Burnett), a member of the first graduating class, recalls that "in the first year or so after college opened, the girls began making money for an endowment fund by shining shoes, running errands, and so forth. Their goal was \$10,000." Records of this fund are not complete but in January 1915 there was an account headed "On hand—\$974.65." In the next five months efforts were renewed; money came in from the greatest variety of sources—for example:

Freshman vaudeville .....	\$20.05	Recital—Misses Washburn	
Latin tutoring .....	4.00	and Walker .....	\$20.05
The Talkative Table .....	3.50	Miss Gascoigne's Dancing	
Mr. Thomas F. Ryan .....	100.00	Class .....	1.76
William Dew (circus) .....	1.00	Class of 1918 .....	800.00
Faculty play .....	143.60	Dan's Grocery Co. ....	5.00
Mrs. Dew's Tea .....	21.40	Mr. Manson .....	1,000.00
Sorrel Top Assn. ....	9.72	Sub-freshmen .....	56.36
Mr. Fergus Reid .....	1,000.00	Wellesley College .....	200.00
Basket Ball game .....	5.30	(from Miss Benedict's friend,	
		Dr. Raymond, resident physi-	
		cian)	

During this period twenty-four gifts totaling \$1,565.88 came in from the Association of Alumnae and Former Students of Sweet Briar College which had been formed in June 1914.

The entire list of donors, about eight times the length of the above, is touching in its revelation of loyalty and of persistent faith that small contributions multiplied many times have their worth. Unfortunately there were then too few alumnae to multiply modest gifts sufficiently to produce more than a fraction of what was needed, and no foundation or individual who could give a significant sum wanted to invest it in a college until that college was well on its own feet.

Miss Benedict looked into "every possible source of financial help and in one of the earliest sessions," she writes, "I went to see the secretary of the General Education Board, then the Reverend Wallace Buttrick. I took



with me our prospectus, our book of views, some architects' drawings and a mind full of vision of Sweet Briar in the future—pretty much as it is today [1951].

"I had a most courteous and kindly and interested reception by Dr. Buttrick. He concluded our talk by saying that the Board would not consider making any gift to any foundation that was not a going concern. . . . He said that Sweet Briar's future looked very dubious to him. We were 'way out in the country, and at that time remote from the world. We were in a part of the country where the idea of a college education for women did not appeal to the residents. He said he thought the way the money left by the founder had been spent did not augur well for a sound financial policy. He said, in fact, that I was attempting something virtually impossible, and advised me to find another job if I wanted to succeed at something!

"... he said that if we could get the college running on a sound basis and show its value . . . we might call again later. . . . The problem was a vicious circle. To get a college established we had to have endowment but to get endowment we had to get a college started."

With these dark thoughts in mind Miss Benedict still had to canvass the needs of the college and boldly request the board to supply them.

The board faithfully responded to Miss Benedict's requests, for it relied on her judgment and trusted her to ask only for what she considered to be truly necessary. It was rewarded by various signs that Sweet Briar was holding its own as a college. In February 1909 entrance requirements to Sweet Briar were announced as being "identical with Vassar, Wellesley and Mount Holyoke, three points less than the Bryn Mawr requirement and varying only in one language requirement from Smith." In 1910 applicants for admission were to present

English .....	3 units	3 units of a second language
history .....	1 units	(French, German, or Greek)
mathematics .....	3 units	1 unit of a third language
Latin .....	4 units	(French or German) or
		a science (physics, chemistry
		or botany)

From outside the college there came encouraging recognition from time to time. In March 1908 the Virginia Association of Schools and Colleges for Girls invited members of the Sweet Briar faculty to join it—and promptly accepted an invitation to hold its second annual meeting at Sweet Briar in June.

Perhaps the most important evidence of Sweet Briar's standing lay in the ability of its students to transfer or graduate into established colleges and universities and continue their work without difficulty. In February 1909 Cornell University wrote that it would accept Sweet Briar graduates in its graduate school, and in 1913 Nan Powell, a member of Sweet Briar's first class, earned her master's degree from Columbia University in one year with no handicaps or concessions.

In 1911 Katherine Wilson, who had completed her freshman year at Sweet Briar, transferred to Vassar with no loss of credit. She later became the wife of Dean O. R. Sellers of the McCormick Theological Seminary and, looking back in 1955, she writes, "I never felt the slightest handicap, either academically or socially, in connection with the transfer and have always been grateful to both colleges for giving me much that has prepared me for the life I have been living." This established Vassar's willingness to take other Sweet Briar students, and a short time afterward when Margaret Johnson successfully transferred to Wellesley she opened the way there to future transfers.

In the fall of 1909 it was the pleasant task of the faculty to consider the matter of caps and gowns. Until then there had been no occasion for wearing them but now there were two: a Founders' Day in November was to honor the Fletcher and Williams families, and a commencement in June was foreseen for five young ladies who were members in good standing of the senior class.

It seemed fitting for the seniors to don for the first time their flowing black symbols of scholastic achievement on Founders' Day. This they did as subsequent senior classes have done, with pride, and for a week they would not be seen without their robes. Then they petitioned the faculty, asking if they might attend classes without them.



Miss Benedict received permission from the University of Vermont for Sweet Briar to duplicate its diploma as a gesture of remembrance toward Elijah Fletcher. In June she distributed five of these and a personal gift from herself—five enameled daisy pendants—to a graduating class which has been an ornament to the records of the college.

Eugenia Griffin Burnett was the first alumna to be elected to Sweet Briar's board of directors. In 1951 when Mrs. Burnett resigned after thirty years' service to the board, the banquet given in her honor was attended by all members of the Class of 1910, a cheerful and charming group of ladies, bringing home to the assembled students, faculty, and alumnae the fact that Sweet Briar is indeed a young college. Mrs. Burnett's two daughters are graduates of Sweet Briar, where both served as president of student government.

Louise Hooper (Mrs. Arnold Ewell) had had a long career of teaching and social service. Two years later, in 1953, she was to be named "The Woman of Outstanding Accomplishment" in Princess Anne County, Virginia, for "distinguished service to humanity through her extensive welfare and social service work, through education, and through all phases of civic betterment. . . ."

Another was Frances Murrell (Mrs. Everingham Rickards), fund agent for the class whose record seldom falls below one hundred per cent. Her daughter Murrell is also a Sweet Briar graduate. Annie Cumnock (Mrs. J. Garland Miller), the fourth in the group, had fostered in her father, Mr. R. L. Cumnock, a deep interest in Sweet Briar. He had served twenty-one years on the board, carrying for a long period the heavy responsibilities of chairman of the executive committee.

Three of the class had sent daughters to Sweet Briar and another, Nan Powell Hodges, had sent a great number of well prepared students from the three preparatory schools which she had headed. In 1951 she was principal of Stuart Hall in Staunton, Virginia. She relinquished that position in 1955 in favor of another Sweet Briar graduate, Martha Dabney Jones of the Class of 1929, and retired to

live in Williamsburg, but continued to serve Sweet Briar as an alumna member of the board of overseers, to which she was elected in 1954. Early in Mrs. Hodges' career she had been dean of women at William and Mary College and there she married William T. Hodges, the dean of men.

"The whole class married!" Dr. Rollins once noted with relief. "This was reassuring to many who in the early days feared that college education would interfere with marriage and be detrimental to domestic life."

Fear of that possible blight from education did not prevent 202 students from enrolling in 1910. The physical plant had been augmented by two more dormitories (Randolph and Manson), one of which contained a much needed auditorium. This facilitated the development of dramatic productions, an activity promoted by the faculty "to encourage wholesome and profitable amusement to take the place of the noisy entertainments which the students devised for themselves." Miss Guion was the director of a move so popular that two drama groups flourished. They devoted their efforts at first to one-act plays and presented drama after drama. One of the curiosities of reports to the faculty on these plays is the oft-appearing note: "Audience: men excluded." This was explained by Dr. Rollins: "When girls took the part of men in plays and wore not the simple doublet of Shakespeare's time but modern trousers and coat and vest, it was not deemed proper for men to be present. In vain we men protested the loss of our rights!"

The reports showed that there was conscientious accounting of time and money spent on the productions, for example: "*You Never Can Tell*, G. B. Shaw. Parts by Eugenia Buffington, Bessie Grammer, Mary Tyler. Got up in ten days, rehearsing from 5:00 to 6:00 only, except for one rehearsal at night. Expenses: \$3.80 for wigs." In 1910-1911 there were seven plays, ending with *Twelfth Night* given during commencement festivities; \$117 was spent and no one seems to have counted rehearsals; the audience



was of course mixed and the costumes were conservative—"Shakespearean, legs wrapped or in boots."

For some years the final play was Shakespearean and was well received by the audience of students and visitors. One student critic writing in the *Briar Patch* (the annual which had at last been published in 1910) admitted that she "was very much averse to seeing it . . . after having seen so many 'idyllics' attempted in colleges and academies." But she was pleasantly surprised. "The success of *As You Like It* was neither moderate nor uninteresting. It was irresistible. . . . The star of the evening, Miss Buffington as Rosalind, succeeded astonishingly well in presenting the swift changes of mood."

The dramatics organization, Paint and Patches, which still flourishes, had a membership of 177 in 1912 which perhaps made it the largest extra-curricular organization outside the Student Government Association; it even had two sub-divisions, The Ripplers and The Merry Jesters.

There was also an active Y.W.C.A. which had sent two delegates to the Blue Ridge Conference near Asheville and had formed a tie, which still exists, with an Indian mission which the Reverend Mr. Arthur Gray had established in the hills not far from Sweet Briar. Mr. Gray had instigated the building of a church and a two-room schoolhouse for several hundred people of mixed Indian-Negro-white stock who lived in this isolated region. Sweet Briar furnished funds for one of the buildings and equipped one room of the school for use as a kitchen. Every week some of the college girls walked the four miles to St. Paul's Mission to conduct classes in simple cooking and sewing, and kindergarten for the children.

Youth presents many faces. By 1913, along with hard and worthy work at the Mission, the students were engaging in the most vociferous battles in the cause of class banners. One eminent alumna is known to have spent the night in a tree guarding her banner, and another intrepidly carried hers to the ridgepole of the refectory. Miss Benedict's role in these skirmishes is interesting: "She sat up nearly all night with us in the woods when we were

having one of our adolescent class fights," one combatant remembers, "because she didn't want us to be there without her and yet, because she knew that it seemed terribly important to us, she didn't want to break our hearts by telling us to go home and try to behave like sensible people."

These struggles were at last transmuted into interclass debates (sample subjects: That capital punishment should be abolished; That the government of the United States should own and control the railroads; That the college in the country has more advantages than the college in town). There was also a college orchestra of sixteen pieces: eight violins, two cellos, and diversity was supplied by the Walker family with their piano, viola, bass-viol, flute, clarinet, and oboe.

A stimulus for organizing athletics had come from a shy but friendly English instructor with a sense of humor and an unusual gift for teaching. Miss Martha Plaisted spent only two years at Sweet Briar before joining the faculty of her own college, Bryn Mawr, but before she left she had organized track, swimming, tennis, and field hockey. The first field day, instigated by her in 1909, was made especially interesting by the loving cup which the faculty donated to be awarded to the outstanding athlete.

Social life was strongly centered on campus and its immediate environs. Students made their own amusements, of sufficient interest that girls who lived in Lynchburg did not want to spend weekends at home lest they miss something at Sweet Briar. Walking was popular—which is fortunate because walking was necessary. Paying a call to the Walkers or to the Barretts, other congenial neighbors who had moved to a farm near campus, meant a good walk.

In 1913 Mr. and Mrs. Edward Barrett came from New York State and bought a rambling old log house on a ridge overlooking Sweet Briar. There they welcomed visitors and served them home-made cider. Mrs. Barrett was a painter and her pictures brighten the homes of many alumnae. She was particularly successful in capturing



the beauty of autumn in Virginia and the varied effects of the mountains. Photographs seem to show the mountains as low and far away from campus, which perhaps they are, but the sense of surrounding mountains is strong and Mrs. Barrett's tendency to pull "The Sleeping Giant" toward Sweet Briar and let him loom near campus displays to advantage the fact that painting may reveal a truth superior to that of the camera's eye.

Another sample of the simplicity of life in those days emerged on opening day of college about 1915 when 56 girls appeared wearing identical blue suits! The concentration of merchandising of college clothes from a few large New York stores was still manifest in the early thirties. One spring so many identical cotton mesh suits appeared in student wardrobes that an "Altman night" was held in the commons for a parade of this model, displayed in five pastel shades.

A pressing concern in 1914 came to light in a petition from the students to the faculty for permission "to dance the one step and the hesitation waltz at the May Day ball." The faculty cautiously acceded to the request "with the understanding that the Floor Committee would see to it that the dancing was not objectionable."

The faculty was always liberal so long as the students did not abuse their privileges. For example, the Student Government Association ruled for quiet after the power plant shut down and lights went out; but no one said that girls should stay in their own rooms. There were frequent parties after "lights," in darkness and with conversation at a whisper, neither light nor talk being really necessary to make eating a pleasure.

Morale on campus was excellent but Miss Benedict had constantly before her the necessity of finding more students who could come to Sweet Briar properly prepared to do college work. To this end efforts were made to make the college and its requirements for entrance more widely known, especially to families whose daughters were still young enough to plan their pre-college program. Dr.

Rollins was sent on a month-long trip to talk to parents and potential students. He admits, "I came back a sadder but wiser man! I went prepared to talk with enthusiasm of the ideals and standards of our new college—of its faculty, and their training at the great universities.

"Great was my disappointment to find that most parents were not interested in such things. Their questions were about other things—the water supply, sewage, the dairy, the buildings, the food and so forth. Only two or three times did I find any interest in our faculty or their training. One conservative father asked particularly about riding and whether the girls were required to ride astride. 'My daughter shall never ride astride!' he said. Another fond parent wanted to know whether we had any snakes at Sweet Briar."

There often seemed to be no clear differentiation in the minds of parents between college, junior college, and finishing school; if their daughter could not be admitted to Sweet Briar or another college then she could go to some other "school" and it seemingly made little difference. An example of the vagueness of parental notions towards preparation for college appears in a letter to Miss Benedict from a father who asked that "the teacher outline a light course of study for his daughter which might be pursued at home. . . ."

Dr. Rollins found the interests of many girls similar to those of their parents. They were concerned about "the nearness of Sweet Briar to Washington and Lee, and Virginia Military Institute and the University of Virginia, and how many dances a year the college had."

Another troubling indication of lack of parental understanding of requirements necessary for a well run college caused endless discussion among the faculty. An unconscionable amount of space in minutes of faculty meetings is taken up in considering the disregard of limits of vacation periods. Apparently only a teacher fully understands what deterioration occurs in classes when vacations are recklessly expanded. At any rate, some parents manifested little insight into the problem and caused at least as much



trouble as the girls did. There was no established tradition to deal with "this vexed question" and enrollment was too limited to threaten expulsion if all else failed. For a while all else failed.

The faculty made various dire rulings, including a two-week suspension for late return from vacation. Parents found this outrageous and seemed to think it an unfeeling plot to separate them from their young. When it was proposed that offenders should "stand special examination in all studies . . . and pay a fee of \$2 for each examination taken" the action had to be rescinded "in consideration of the irate and obstinate attitude of the parents."

The next year (1911) at Christmas the faculty thought they had solved the problem by requesting that the president be notified in advance of late returns from vacation. The result was that Miss Benedict received fourteen letters, telegrams and telephone calls bearing messages of influenza, missed trains, death, weddings, determined dentists reluctant to release their patients and, of course, colds—one of them "of a variable and alarming sort which might develop at any time into pneumonia." One father wired that his daughter was "compelled to go to Birmingham." The faculty warily took no action "as the significance of the message was uncertain."

More than 9% of the students returned late that year whereas in 1954, with a student body more than double the size in 1911, the habit of prompt return had been established to the extent that only 4% of students were not on hand to start the new year, in each case for reasons satisfactory to the dean.

In 1913-1914 there were 240 students living in the four dormitories. A few more commuted from Amherst. Considering that college had opened in 1906 with only 36 boarding students, this should have been an encouraging figure. Actually it gave no cause for rejoicing for only 74 of these were college students.

Miss Benedict was sick at heart. She had come to Virginia to preside over a college. She had given her whole

self with all her splendid energy for seven years towards bringing her ideal to fruition. Exactly what she gave and what she meant to Sweet Briar can hardly be overestimated.

Alumnae of the early period are agreed that the full significance of Miss Benedict's contribution to the college may not—or even cannot—be adequately recorded. Those alumnae are almost unanimous in an eager admiration and affection for Miss Benedict; at the same time they are aware that it was extremely difficult to know and fully appreciate Miss Benedict without working with her. A brief and casual encounter revealed a dignified woman, tall, serene and quiet—very quiet. A conversational sally was apt to be met by a brief straightforward answer which did not open avenues for further repartee.

Some of her young faculty members, reacting to this reticence, "stood in awe and ignorance of her. They thought she was high and mighty and wanted no part in their life," according to Miss Guion, who continues, "Quite the opposite was true. She was shy and reserved and had no facility for meeting them with the small social amenities." Miss Guion also explains that because of a restricted diet Miss Benedict eschewed many social gatherings: "It was easier for her to refuse an invitation than to appear and refuse all the party food."

She never enjoyed assuming a commanding role, even in the simplest things. She preferred, for instance, to let one of the faculty members at her dining table give orders to the waitress; she would ask another member of the faculty to introduce visiting lecturers to their audience.

But she never shrank from exercising leadership in other ways, subtly and, to an amazing degree, effectively. The evaluation of Miss Benedict which comes out most often is appreciation of her genius for influencing students and doing this in a manner so unobtrusive as to make them feel they were acting on their own. A specific example of this is related by Miss Guion:

"Once as I passed Miss Benedict's office, I saw a number of girls waiting to see her, among them Emmy Thomas.



I said, 'Well, Emmy, where do you want to go when?' She said she wanted to go to Washington and Lee "come Saturday." Later I met Emmy and asked her if she were going. She said, 'No, I decided I didn't really want to go; I have so much work I should like to get done over the weekend.' I asked her if Miss Benedict told her she couldn't go and she said, 'She certainly did not. She told me I could go if I wanted to and if I thought it wise. I just decided I really didn't want to go.'

"This was Miss Benedict's usual method of guiding students . . ." continues Miss Guion. "She rarely refused permission; her psychology was on the adult level and stimulated an adult reaction in even the young sub-freshman girls."

Not only could she work upon a student in face-to-face conversation but through a few students she could disseminate ideas through the whole group. Nan Powell Hodges tells of how the wish to have sororities died hard among the first students, but it did die because Miss Benedict knew that in such a small group sororities could be devastating. In this way she eliminated them yet created no resentment against herself:

In the first year of college national sororities had been rejected by the faculty, but there developed in the second year three or four secret clubs. Mrs. Hodges recalls that "soon after our return for the third year, Miss Benedict sent for me as president of student government and explained very thoroughly her idea of democracy for Sweet Briar and how secret clubs could destroy the unity and the friendliness of a group as small as ours. She and I planned that I would talk to leaders in the different groups and present to them the unpleasant possibilities which could arise. Then we had a student government meeting to discuss 'democracy for Sweet Briar.' At this meeting the girls I had talked to expressed themselves, others joined in, and soon a resolution was offered, seconded and passed that there would be no secret clubs at Sweet Briar!

"As president of student government for two years I had an unusual opportunity to see how Miss Benedict, time

and time again, working through the girls, tactfully added . . . those features which she knew—and we certainly did not know—made for a real college. Never for a moment did she lose her vision or her determination to make of Sweet Briar a real college.

"And yet through it all she never sacrificed the individual. None of us can guess how many times she helped a girl make difficult decisions—all the way from persuading (again through student government) a newly elected May queen to withdraw because she was failing academically, to reforming petty thieves. If a girl were entirely truthful, Miss Benedict would go to any length to help her. I know of an instance where theft occurred and Miss Benedict not only made it possible for the girl who had taken money to repay a sizeable sum over a period of years but the girl left with a keen loyalty to both Miss Benedict and to the college; she is today a regular contributor to the Alumnae Fund."

If some of the faculty were a bit awed by Miss Benedict, others of them fully appreciated her. Miss Sparrow says of her: "She radiated serenity, power. Here was a great soul. Pettiness disappeared. Problems of personality evaporated, tempers calmed, details fell into their proper place." Her slowness to comment, her reluctance to take sides were great strengths. These attributes coupled with intelligence and ability to discover and remember relevant facts gave her a character which might almost be described as Olympian; to incipient controversy she brought an intensely interested, thoroughly informed, non-interference. In the presence of it, the principals often had their vision suddenly clarified and instead of pushing one side of an argument with all their strength and vocabulary, they could suddenly see the whole problem with its two sides—and the argument was over before it had started.

This great soul was also the same woman who could enjoy a long wait at a railroad station with a noisy, happy group of adolescents; who for two years camped out with some of them—even when it snowed—in a little shelter which stood approximately where the gymnasium is. She



was the same woman who was walking one day with Miss McLaws through a dormitory; when they passed a sadly untidy room Miss Benedict quickly said, "Let's put it in order," which they did—and as they left, Miss Benedict stuck one of her cards in the door to show that she had called. She was the woman who might be found walking about the campus at almost any hour of the night, inspecting, planning, or merely walking. She once met a blackened Mr. Watts coming at three in the morning from the repair of one of the kitchen ovens. Mr. Watts was surprised at the encounter but not Miss Benedict; she questioned him with concern about the emergency then urged him to take next morning off to make up lost sleep.

Miss Benedict was a philosopher but she was no ivory tower philosopher. She was aware of and thoughtful of individuals, and no detail of the organization for which she had assumed responsibility was too small—or too large—for her attention. In her own person she had in the first years combined the functions of director of admissions, committee on curriculum, registrar, and dean as well as the accepted presidential duties of selecting faculty and determining policy with the advice and consent of the board. She had come to Sweet Briar with the intent to make it a college of the first rank and in no way had she swerved from this goal.

After seven years of devoted labor she had now to face with the board the fact that less than a third of the student body was at a collegiate level academically and that each year the college was sinking more deeply into debt. What course was left to the board but to increase the enrollment, at whatever necessary price to the ideal college? Nothing in life is ideal; compromises must be made.

But this was a compromise that Miss Benedict could not make. In October 1914 she submitted her resignation "on the ground that the ideals of education which I cherish cannot be attained, if there should be any relaxation of the stringency of the college's present requirements."

The board's reply to this is heartfelt and eloquent:

"... as proof of its loyalty to this ideal was the adoption of rules at the president's suggestion under which . . . the scholastic requirements were made more stringent. The attendance under this restriction . . . has fallen to 180 [from 277]. The experience of the past two years has proven that we should only invite financial disaster if we continue on this line at present. . . . The financial situation . . . must control the action of the board which is responsible to its creditors and its employees.

"But more than money is required to make a college and the board holds that the first president and organizer of the school is one of its most important assets, and that it would be a great and irreparable blow to the school for Miss Benedict to leave it at this juncture. To a greater extent than she realizes in her modesty, the president is the college to the faculty, the students and the public. If she were to leave at this juncture, so great would be the disheartenment and disorganization that we doubt whether any kind of a school could be conducted here—certainly its success would be most problematical. Under these circumstances the board feels that she ought to aid them to regain the favorable status of several years ago—before they embarked upon the experimental limitation of the studies. If she must leave us, they suggest that this crisis in the financial life of our college and nation is not the proper time for the president to offer her resignation. They therefore ask her to withdraw it. The association of years has only deepened their sense of the president's high character, educational equipment and consecration to this institution's welfare. According to our ability we shall continue to work with her. Let us see whether we cannot solve our problems, in view of the conditions that confront us. Let us allow Time with its unexpected developments to come to our assistance and the seed that has been sown in these years to bring forth its proper harvest. In view of these considerations and of our common loyalty to this institution we ask the president to reconsider her action and withdraw her resignation."

Miss Benedict appreciated the position of the board.



She replied: "I will continue for a year along the lines you suggest and do my best to increase the patronage and handle it as best I can.

"I feel that I cannot now look forward to more than one year of work here under the educational conditions necessitated by financial considerations and therefore I should like to have my resignation stand for 1916 or else be left free to put it in a year from this time, as you prefer."

At the end of that year, her resignation still tabled, Miss Benedict asked for partial leave. Her thoughts turned again to her early dream of a medical career and in 1915-1916 she spent half of each week in Baltimore taking courses in the medical school at the Johns Hopkins University.

On April 11, 1916, the board of directors met at Sweet Briar with all members present. There were Bishop Randolph, still president, and Mr. Gray, the surviving trustees from the little group of four that had first met fifteen years previously to procure a charter for Sweet Briar Institute; there were Dr. Grammer and Judge Watts who had been on the board of directors since its first meeting; there were Mr. Manson, Mr. Heald and Mr. Reid who had each served ten years or more on the board. At this meeting they had to make a grave decision: to accept the resignation of Miss Benedict.

In spite of the fact that the board was aware that the students were devoted to their president, it could not have foreseen the magnitude of student reaction on the day that Miss Benedict called a convocation of students and faculty and announced her forthcoming departure. The students were thrown into an indignant uproar that lasted for the remaining weeks of the school year. They fruitlessly petitioned the board to reinstate Miss Benedict. The class of 1916 requested that Miss Benedict at least be permitted to deliver its diplomas to them—which she would have done anyway. On campus there was no peace and there was little to reassure Miss Benedict's successor

who visited Sweet Briar for a few days before commencement that June. Her only welcome came from the board and the faculty. Youth finds it hard to transfer loyalties and Miss Benedict had meant so much personally to the girls that it was impossible for those who would return in the fall to look forward with anything but gloom to a Sweet Briar without Miss Benedict.



## CHAPTER V

*Widening Horizons*

1916-1925

EMILIE WATTS McVEA, dean of women at the University of Cincinnati, received a visit in the spring of 1916 from Dr. Carl Grammer which resulted in his pleased report to the board of directors at Sweet Briar that he had discovered what he considered a prize. There were questions for Miss McVea to weigh before she could give Dr. Grammer an answer to his invitation to become Sweet Briar's second president. Her ailing mother who lived with her had to be considered, as did the pros and cons of relinquishing the known and liked for the new and untried.

In the midst of debating these rather usual considerations Miss McVea was assailed by a wholly novel element in the situation. A committee of two arrived in Cincinnati from Sweet Briar. A student and an alumna had made the journey for the express purpose—briefly and politely stated in less than ten minutes—of presenting to her a petition signed by almost every student which respectfully requested her not to accept the presidency of Sweet Briar. There was a faint hope, they pointed out, that Miss Benedict might yet be persuaded to stay.

Precisely what Miss McVea's thoughts were on this visitation will have to be surmised; her reaction was to telephone to Dr. Grammer that evening and give him her acceptance. Then, knowing the worst, she paid her first visit to Sweet Briar a few days before commencement in June 1916.

Emilie McVea had encountered difficulties all her life; she was not to be daunted by one more. When she was a child in Louisiana her father's ailing health had caused a removal to Abingdon, Virginia, for the mineral waters

there. Her father died in Abingdon and Mrs. McVea took her three daughters, one a baby in arms, to live with her sister in Raleigh, North Carolina. Her sister's husband, the Reverend Mr. John E. C. Smedes, was principal of St. Augustine's School for Negroes in Raleigh and in the rectory in which the Smedes made their home were already five children of their own plus an orphaned niece whom they had adopted. The McVeas brought the household to an even dozen which included three "Emilies" and four "Henriettas." Their circumstances were far from opulent and the family was beset with illness; before her children were grown Mrs. Smedes had succumbed to tuberculosis and to Mrs. McVea fell the task of running the large household.

The young Emilie McVea was no stranger to work and worry, but neither was she cast down by trouble. Her cousin Henrietta Smedes said of her that as a little girl she "was an eager leader . . . but . . . not a good student . . . more interested in living than in books. . . . [She] had a hot and violent temper [which] she later learned to control. I don't think her friends in adult life realized the conquest she had gained over her natural tendency. . . ."

When Emilie was twelve the family moved over to St. Mary's School for girls which was headed by Mr. Smedes' brother. There the six girls were enrolled and there "Emmie became a serious student, standing high in her classes." She was full of enthusiasms, had various heroes including "Chinese Gordon" and El Mahdi, and she entertained a great admiration for Queen Victoria. She showed interest in government, foreign and domestic, and she wrote poems and essays.

It so happened that Emilie McVea and Daisy Williams had been born in the same year, 1867. And in the year that Daisy's brief life came to an end Emilie, who was later to be an interested resident of Daisy's home, was graduated from St. Mary's. She received her diploma from the hands of another who was to live in Sweet Briar House, although not as president of the college—Miss Marie Elizabeth Josephine Czarnomska. Miss Czarnomska,



the lady principal of St. Mary's, and head of its department of literature, was a woman in her middle thirties, "tall, slender, of queenly bearing, with steel-gray eyes, and with jet black hair worn in a French twist in the coils of which the red rose she affected seemed naturally to belong." It was her opinion that she had never graduated such a brilliant class as that one of 1884—and her opinions were not taken lightly.

At any rate, there was Emilie McVea, full of promise and eager to continue her education, but with not a dollar to her name. She was glad to be an instructor at St. Mary's until she had earned enough to enter Cornell University. Before she could be graduated St. Mary's called her back and by her twenty-fifth birthday she had become lady principal of the school. She was still ambitious, however, and much as she loved St. Mary's she at last resigned to return to college, this time at the George Washington University where she earned the A.B. and A.M. degrees.

In 1902 she went as instructor in English to the University of Tennessee and two years later accepted the invitation of Charles W. Dabney to go to the city of Cincinnati where he had just been called to become president of its university. There Miss McVea was assistant professor of English and dean of women. Her career in Cincinnati has been admiringly described by one of her colleagues there, Dr. Martin H. Fischer, Eichberg professor of physiology:

"Miss McVea arrived at the University of Cincinnati at the time of a great infusion from without. She was a welcomed equal in this group (and the only woman). . . . She was not only the colleague of these men but a cherished one, for she was herself individualistic and new-thinking, and competent in every way not only to hold the ground upon which she stood but to parry blows.

"But Emilie McVea was not just another professor. . . . Within the institution and in her own charmingly arranged home, she was the undisputed social heart of the University, the welcomer of every passing or tarrying guest and the spokesman for what she and her colleagues in the University were trying to do for the city and the nation. . . .

Her acceptance of responsibility for the University's social front was really a self-imposed and arduous labor. . . ."

"But as though such labors were insufficient for the day, Emilie McVea associated herself with every important social movement. Secondary school education, child labor, literary productiveness, the drama, an open university forum, the interests of college women, university standards and university administration, the parity of men and women in university posts, competent teachers for women's colleges, states' rights and the definitions of democracy were just a few of the interests to which she lent her marvellous energies. . . . She was an advocate of the enfranchisement of women . . . [in this] she aligned herself with the minority [in Cincinnati] and within the inner circle of her friends she stood almost alone." One woman challenging her with disadvantages of the franchise for women exclaimed, "It will give the vote to prostitutes!" Miss McVea's reply was, "Who needs it more?"

"She delighted her students," continued Dr. Fischer, "and, as dean, made 'conferences' with her . . . an opportunity to take counsel from one who knew the beauties and the disappointments of life's roadways.

"Emilie McVea, never really strong, fought the weakening effects of illness for years. . . . But no poverty of initial store of physical energies ever retarded her in their reckless expenditure. An object needed only to appear upon the horizon for her to order every sail set."

In 1916 "an object" had appeared. A young and small college with grave financial problems and a tumultuous student body needed a president.

Not only Sweet Briar students but also the Sweet Briar faculty had communicated with Miss McVea before her arrival—not hostile but wondering. In May 1916 Miss Gay Pattenon penned for the faculty a discreet inquiry as to Miss McVea's "plans for the academic future of Sweet Briar." For one thing, she wrote, the students were uncertain and some were contemplating transferring to other



institutions if there were to be a lowering of standards. What sort of counsel could the faculty offer them?

The answer was prompt and clear: "You may certainly assure the students for me that the B.A. from Sweet Briar will never mean less than it does now. The fact that Sweet Briar had achieved a college standing was my greatest inducement for accepting its presidency. Under no circumstances would I have considered leaving a University known throughout the country . . . for any position in an institution not of college grade."

After expressing approval of the complete separation of academy from college she continued, "It is impossible to conceive that any president of a college should make any changes regarding the curriculum without consultation with the faculty. To my mind, the institution is always so much larger than the individual that the life of the institution should be continuous."

Thus reassured, the faculty was able to give her a cordial welcome. It willingly accompanied Miss McVea as she launched into the academic year 1916-1917 "with every sail set."

Miss McVea brought to the Sweet Briar campus a new point of view. Sweet Briar's own situation had not altered greatly between September 1915 and September 1916. The academy was almost as large as the college; there was still great financial pressure; there was still the dearth of adequately prepared applicants for the college. But as a newcomer, Miss McVea did not have the weight of years of worry over those particular problems to depress her.

Neither was she held to a vision of Sweet Briar as college-and-nothing-but-college; she had not labored for ten years with that vision steadily before her; hence, she was not compelled to feel the frustration and restriction which had so disheartened her predecessor. Such an academy as Sweet Briar maintained was a familiar and necessary adjunct of many colleges of that day and for the new president it had none of the symbolic overtones of failure which it carried for Miss Benedict. Also, two years before Miss

McVea's arrival the board had provided the academy with its own principal, thus relieving the president of much of the administrative responsibility connected with it.

With sanguine attitude Miss McVea focussed her attention on diversifying and augmenting the college. She recorded her aims in the college yearbook published during her first year: "The work of the past has been to establish; the work of the future must be to enlarge. . . . [The] curriculum, though high, has been inelastic . . . it remains now to . . . enrich the curriculum, to relate it more closely to the ends of our complex modern life, to bring the college into firm and vital relationship with education and community centers. . . . Today the demand of community and educational responsibility is imperative upon private foundations as well as upon state-supported institutions. This responsibility entails the training of students, too, in political and social science, in the problems of housing, in the needs of cities and rural communities, in the laws controlling the activities of the schools and of homes. It demands from the faculties not only teaching of a high order, but also research, production, and extension work. . . . The higher education lays an obligation upon each member of the faculty to do some part through investigation, or through active personal participation, to make himself a necessary part of the institution and of the community."

Miss McVea started at once to put these words into effect insofar as possible. At her first faculty meeting she suggested that Sweet Briar's rigid entrance requirements might be altered. To her it was conceivable that girls offering less than the prescribed four units of Latin might be admitted; they could be candidates for the B.S. degree, a degree which had been approved by the board long before college opened but had never been granted.

When the students heard of this proposition it might have been assumed from the magnitude of their protest against it that Sweet Briar was the cradle of classical learning in America. They heatedly proclaimed that the academic standing of the college would be brought low by



such a step. The decision on the question lay, of course, with the faculty. That year they voted it down; in 1920 they voted again and passed it.

On the other hand the committee on instruction, headed by Miss Sparrow, willingly set to work at Miss McVea's suggestion to provide a greater number and more widely diverse offering of courses. The committee studied catalogues of other colleges, wrote letters, inquired into the changes that seemed feasible for Sweet Briar. At the year's end they submitted recommendations for comprehensive changes: new departments should be created in physics, social science, education, and physical education; existing departments should be divided, e.g. Romance languages from German, history from political and social sciences, biology from botany; new courses should be added in physics, sociology, physiology, English, Roman antiquities, Greek history, French history, and physical education. They urged a re-examination of the place of household economics and of art in the curriculum for the A.B. degree.

Such steps could not all be taken immediately but it was stimulating to have plans drawn for the future, and they did guide the changes that were made through the following years.

Another move was afoot: the president informed the faculty that she "had presented to the Board of Trustees a plan to have Sweet Briar made the State College for women, co-ordinate with the University of Virginia and the Board had approved the plan." Attempts were made to inform state legislators of the proposal and to promote it in other ways. But such an arrangement was never consummated for the board reconsidered and decided that such a move would violate the intention of Mrs. Williams's will.

During her first year Miss McVea also proposed the creation of a body uniting faculty and student deliberations on campus problems. A College Council was formed to discuss legislation of the Student Government Association, questions of general college interest, and cases of honor; such a council was to be composed of three each

from the executive committees of faculty and Student Government Association, plus the president of the association and the president of the college.

This was a step continuing in the direction which student government at Sweet Briar had taken from the beginning—a blending of faculty influence and student responsibility, with administrative authority only entering into situations of unusual gravity.

Miss McVea gave faculty and board reason to be satisfied with their president but the students who were devoted to Miss Benedict had to graduate and depart before Miss McVea came into her own among the girls. An alumna of 1917 remembers that her class felt a certain indignation that the president was not able to call the seniors—only eleven of them—by name. In middle age herself now, she admits that this seems neither so surprising nor so serious to her as it did then. After all, Miss McVea was forty-nine when she arrived and, besides staff and faculty, she had 132 college students to become acquainted with as well as 121 academy girls. But where Miss Benedict had known everyone by name and had also made a point of meeting every newcomer on arrival, with the new administration it was Miss McLaws who was first to know all the students. Cordial and soft-spoken, she used to spend opening day in Gray parlor greeting all arrivals and helping new girls to find their rooms.

The president's immediate concerns were with the faculty and among them she was well liked. Miss Ruth Howland, who taught biology for many years, describes her thus: "By conventional standards she was not good looking. Her features were not regular; the cheek bones were too high and the nose was too small (she used to laugh about it); her complexion was a bit sallow. But what you thought of when you saw her was the radiant friendliness which always shone from her eyes. She met people with a quick warm smile of welcome.

"She joked about her inability to 'wear' clothes; even if they were expensive and well chosen, on her they were



somehow lacking in style. But we saw her as she was, not as she looked—a generous and outgoing soul with great humility of spirit.

"Miss McVea . . . was always bustling about but she was not tense or highstrung. No one who wanted to talk over a problem with her ever had reason to hesitate; she always had time to listen to the opinions of others—in fact, she solicited them and weighed them carefully.

"With the faculty she showed great understanding. For instance, she was always prepared when some came early in second semester to offer their resignations. Performance of students on midyear examinations had been disappointing; snow and ice chilled body and spirit. When they came in this mood, Miss McVea would say, 'Think it over a few weeks and come to see me again.' Then when the first spring days arrived, with mockingbirds singing, daffodils blooming and sun streaming down, in they would come and say they had decided to stay. She would beam and say, 'You see? It was just the February Low!'"

And she appreciated the individual problems of the faculty. "In one instance" that Miss Howland knew of "she felt that a gifted young instructor in music would go far in a larger place. She personally urged her to leave and even offered to back her financially until she got a start. Her judgment was later more than justified. . . ."

These happy attributes were not fully apparent to some of the students in 1916. As an indication, during Miss McVea's first two years her picture in the college annual was relegated, uncaptioned, to back pages while Miss Benedict's portrait occupied a full page as honorary member of one class.

Miss McVea did, however, find friends among a small group of upperclassmen who understood her difficult position, and among the unprejudiced freshmen entering in 1916. They elected her as their honorary member and her relation with her "classmates" seems to have been a happy one. She soon honored them with a reception at Sweet Briar House for which invitations read, "Mr. and Mrs. James H. Williams at home to the Freshman Class."

The guests were greeted by five students dressed in the clothes of Miss Indie and Henry, young Daisy, Uncle Sidney, and Aunt Lilybell—looking a little self-conscious but pleased nevertheless to help instill in the newcomers a feeling for the house and its past residents.

Imaginative parties of that sort were soon curtailed by the sober absorptions of World War I; by the next autumn most extracurricular activity was focused on this national concern. Changes on the campus at Sweet Briar did not vary greatly from what happened at most women's colleges throughout the country: students packed surprise Christmas boxes and collected magazine stories for soldiers; they knitted and folded surgical dressings. Some of the faculty offered their services in summer to understaffed factories; Miss Morenus, for one, helped to maintain the output of overalls from Lynchburg. Short courses were offered at Sweet Briar in food production and conservation, war diet, dairying, typing, public speaking, and wireless telegraphy. A more exciting incident was the arrival of one young lady's swain, a young aviator who landed on campus in his little biplane. This was the first sight of an airplane for many, and it was intently inspected by all.

Perhaps the most remarkable feat inspired by the war was the collection of sums of money which, for the size of the student body, were astonishing. On Armistice Day, Mr. George Irwin addressed the college in behalf of the Students' Friendship War Fund. His tentative hope that he might raise \$5,000 was met that day by pledges totaling more than \$7,000—and before the Christmas holidays every dollar had been paid.

The college had some difficulty in celebrating the armistice properly. A member of the class of 1922 tells of Miss McVea standing on the running board of her Ford "telling us on November 9, 1918, of the Armistice. Miss McVea spoke in beautiful terms of what peace would mean to us. She had a vast vocabulary and her choice of words was a delight. That was the false Armistice and isolated as we were—no radios of course—we did not know until the



thirteenth that the Armistice had actually been signed on the eleventh."

Shortly after Mr. Irwin's visit the college was stricken by the nation-wide epidemic of influenza. Seventy-two students, all the waitresses, and some of the faculty were ill. The infirmary staff was fearfully overworked but it is a tribute to its ministrations, and perhaps to the bracing outdoor lives that Briarites lived, that all survived. Mid-winter examinations were postponed because the siege played havoc with the schedule, and classes had to be made up during second semester.

In 1918-1919 the United Drive, a nation-wide drive sponsored by seven different organizations, brought a response described in the *Briar Patch* in terms unmistakably identified with World War I: "The boys in khaki had gone 'over the top' to a glorious victory for us; it was our part to stand behind them every minute until the transports brought them to us again." The girls of Sweet Briar stood behind them in the amount of more than \$10,000. Some did their bit for reconstruction by sewing clothes for French and Belgian babies while the psychology professor, Miss Josephine Simrall, read aloud to them.

An International Relations Club was inspired in 1920 by Dr. Ivan McDougale, the dynamic professor of sociology and economics, who secured from the Carnegie Corporation a grant which financed the visit of a number of speakers. They kept interest in the club at a high pitch. The first president of the club reminds us with irony of the sharp difference between post-war considerations then and now: "There were no international affairs to be settled—keeping the peace was the theme. Realize that 'the war to end wars' had just ended; peace there would always be!"

Problems of war and curriculum never suffice to discourage the approval of young ladies for changing styles and customs. Evolution occurred in several fields. Pictures of swimmers in successive issues of the *Briar Patch* reveal a process not unlike the metamorphosis of the tadpole, as scalloped ruffles on bathing caps and pantaloons reaching

to mid-calf began to be absorbed, and legs began to be visible—a few additional inches each year.

Shortly after the war gaudy sport stockings woven with stripes or plaids were introduced. A picture exists of a "Hose Brigade" displaying such stockings in chorus-girl formation, with faces discreetly turned from the camera. Lace collars of Irish crochet were in every wardrobe and a beaded evening dress was a "must." A familiar sight in the dell was a knot of girls intent on sewing beads on dresses, several pounds of them per garment. Spats worn over pumps added great chic to the costumes worn into Lynchburg for afternoons of shopping which inevitably ended with a "chocolate stir" at Craighill & Jones.

For sports there were engulfing middy blouses pulled well down over bloomers that looked like two parachutes walking. Impeded though they were by these voluminous vestments and handicapped by a low-ceilinged gymnasium in the basement of Grammer Hall, basketball players nevertheless kept their enthusiasm high, and in 1923 they arranged a trip to Bryn Mawr for a basketball game which Bryn Mawr won, by a large score. Three years earlier, the first intercollegiate hockey match was played with Westhampton College in Richmond. In 1924 sport shirts and knee length running trunks were permitted for Field Day and, thus unencumbered, the high jumpers raised the record from the 1906 level of 3'6" to 4'3". Miss Harriet Rogers, present director of physical education said, "The authorization of this shocking garb occurred the year before I came but the reverberations from the decision were still distinctly audible."

Another sign of the times emerged in 1919 when the board considered purchasing a movie projector for the college. This proposal was rejected, but three years later another technical triumph appeared on campus when Mr. Cumnock donated \$300 for the purchase of "a radio receiving station."

One of the most sensitive indicators of the march of time is, of course, the coiffure. In the early twenties hair was puffed over the ears and brought in a swooping dip over



the forehead; by 1923 a few progressives cut it and wore it in incredibly fluffy marcel. Likewise some progressives had been experimenting with tobacco and late in 1922 the first suspension for smoking was recorded.

It was a time of changing mores. In Miss McVea's own words, spoken in 1925, it was "a crucial period in the social life of the country and an exceptionally critical time for young people. Old restraints have been relaxed; chaperonage has almost vanished; the constant violations of law, especially the Eighteenth Amendment, by all classes and ages; the cynicism of modern literature, and of the aftermath of the war; the excitements of social life, due largely to the automobile and to the introduction of jazz music—all have contributed to unrest and to the breaking up of formerly accepted social standards. Naturally these conditions have been reflected in our colleges all over the country.

"In the main, Sweet Briar has little to regret in the conduct of its students." She judged social life at Sweet Briar to be "moderately dignified" and attributed this to joint efforts of students and faculty on the college council and to the fact that students were giving more thought to their own standards for action. Recognizing the value of a quality which every president of the college has cherished and nurtured, Miss McVea further wrote, "The freedom of the life of Sweet Briar is unusual in the south and contributes largely towards the spirit of joy and happiness which is the marked feature of our college life."

It was indeed the era that provided lurid material for Hemingway, Dos Passos, and Fitzgerald, and Sweet Briar did not entirely escape its influences. During those years a passenger on a train through the dry state of Virginia sought, when an inspector passed through his car, to divest himself of seven bottles of whiskey by hiding them under the mattress of the berth of a Sweet Briar girl who was chatting in another car. His hopes that if the cache were discovered it would not be valued by the berth's occupant were unfounded. When the train stopped at Sweet Briar in the early morning seven bottles were lugged off in a

bulging suitcase and were properly appreciated in a series of eggnog parties, judiciously distributed so that no conspicuous effects were noted.

This incident was especially savored for its rarity, however. On the whole the distance of the college from cities tempered the impact of the age upon students. Trips away from college were very limited and exposure to the changing social life of the times was most apt to come during vacations, with parental influence close at hand.

One of the pleasantest traditions, started in 1922 and quite out of keeping with the atmosphere of the Flaming Twenties, was the innovation of step-singing. On Sunday afternoons seniors sat on the refectory steps—known as "The Golden Stairs" and sacred to seniors—while the other classes formed a square in front of them and took turns singing. Some of the songs were popular tunes of the day or old favorites, but most of them had words modified to have special meaning for Briarites.

There was always a great interest in singing at Sweet Briar. Serenades of "sister classes" were frequent, when the juniors came across campus late in the evening to sing to the freshmen, or the sophomores gathered under the windows of the seniors. And the Glee Club gave a very special serenade on the morning of the day of departure for Christmas vacation. The singers rose at 4 o'clock and gradually awoke the whole campus with Christmas carols as they moved from building to building.

As Miss Adeline Ames, the professor of botany who came in 1919, recalls, "Our amusements in the twenties were unsophisticated. Walking was still one of the chief diversions and on Saturday afternoons the traffic by foot on the back road through the woods to Amherst was heavy." Once there, the girls, who seldom had much spending money faced a trying decision: to have tea at the Robertsons' where fifteen cents would buy a cheese and olive sandwich, a piece of chocolate cake, and a cup of tea, or to spend the fifteen cents on a ride back to campus with "Bus" Rhea, who ran the college bus. He was a jolly man, full of talk, and a likable character. Miss Ames, like many another,



found that "on my return each autumn, in the journey from the station he managed to give me the accumulated gossip of the summer—and how he enjoyed it!"

Bus's home was on the old Amherst Road and lay just off the north boundary of campus; hence, it later became the nearest place where students could legally smoke and Bus had no dearth of visitors. Miss McVea herself had said, "Women are going to smoke, so why don't we make provision for it here? It's coming." But she was overruled and not only was smoking forbidden on campus but the faculty went on record in 1924 with a firm statement that "smoking will not be countenanced on journeys to and from Sweet Briar . . . nor within a radius of one hundred miles except in private homes where a student is visiting on leave of absence granted by the Dean."

The introduction of smoking and bobbed hair were minor manifestations of the social ferment resulting from the war. Another more significant result was the suddenness with which Europe and America turned, as it were, and looked at each other across the Atlantic with new interest; hence it was an exciting day at Sweet Briar when the first student from "the other side" set foot on campus. Mlle. Antoinette Malet received a warm welcome when she arrived in 1919 from France. Her response to Sweet Briar matched the cordiality of her American classmates, judging from her comments at the end of her year in Virginia: "What astonished me is the organization of the Student Government Association. The students form a small republic which has set up wise laws and everyone makes it a matter of honor to accept and respect them."

"The American girl soon acquires a sense of responsibility. She has astonished me by her initiative, her collective activity, her physical activity, her gaiety and her social ease. I believe a French girl has much to learn from contact with her."

Sweet Briar has not let international ties lapse; nearly fifty foreign girls representing nations all the way from Finland to Viet Nam, have followed Antoinette.

Another aftermath of the war was of deep significance to the college: the widespread shift in attitudes toward women. For one thing, the board of directors invited into its membership Mrs. Mary Cook Branch Munford. After two years an alumna, Eugenia Griffin Burnett succeeded her. The magnitude of this change can be realized when it is contrasted with Miss Benedict's early appearance at board meetings—by invitation only—to present her report after most of the business had been transacted.

An even more telling effect of the transformed status of women was the eagerness of parents for their daughters to have a first-class education, instead of a year or two "away at school." This timely change substantially abetted the exertions of Miss McVea to increase enrollment. She traveled and spoke in behalf of Sweet Briar, not only to preparatory schools but to educational associations, to women's clubs, and elsewhere. During the war she made speeches for the Y.W.C.A. and the Federal Food Administration. Later, some of her talks further helped to make the college known in an indirect fashion, as its eloquent president spoke on other topics which interested her: "Religion Today," "The Need of Women in Politics," "Some Tendencies in Modern Poetry." She went to many places in Virginia, and to Cleveland, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Chicago, and New York.

These appearances, coupled with the post-war interest in educating young women, eliminated Sweet Briar's longstanding difficulty of attracting students whose goal was unquestionably a college education. By 1919 there was a sufficient number of such applicants to make it possible to dissolve the academy. At long last, the early hopes of the directors and Miss Benedict were realized. Sweet Briar College remained—with no academy to mislead the casually informed.

Sweet Briar College then began to receive official recognition which assured its status among educational institutions of the nation. Miss Benedict's hard work in establishing and maintaining a solid core of high standards



both in competence and conscience and Miss McVea's success in diversifying the offerings of the college and making them known bore fruit when Sweet Briar was admitted, in 1920, into the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools of the Southern States. (This association changed its title in 1933 to the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.) The following year Sweet Briar took its place with top ranking institutions on the lists of the Association of American Colleges and Universities and the American Council on Education. The American Association of University Women first admitted Sweet Briar alumnae into its membership in 1921. This last recognition was not only encouraging; it was a real inspiration to the faculty, according to one professor who remembers its importance to Sweet Briar.

At the college itself there was another sign of Sweet Briar's growth when Miss Katherine Lummis of the classics department became the first dean in 1921.

Miss McVea also endeavored to heighten interest of students in scholastic achievement; she prompted the faculty to institute several means of recognition for outstanding students. Besides departmental honors there were College Honors which carried scholarships to the two freshmen, sophomores, and juniors who not only had high grades but demonstrated "breadth of training and general development as indicated in extra-curricular activity."

An Honors Dinner in February was instituted in 1922 as an immediate reward for the tenth of each class with the highest average of midyear grades. And in 1923 the coveted Founders' Day Honors for upperclassmen were established with an accompanying award to capture the imagination: one wish to be granted by the dean. A happy winner of Founders' Day Honors might depart for Christmas vacation a week early, or have a car at school for the last six weeks of the year, or she might decide to omit the inconvenience of taking semester examinations.

There were tangible manifestations of growth, too. For better or for worse, four new houses for faculty were added along the south side of Faculty Row. These were wel-

comed for the new living space they offered, and bitterly criticized for their looks which, to say no more, suggest no identifiable style. The significance of the interlocutions stemming from those houses is well summarized by one who knew both Miss Benedict and Miss McVea: "Miss McVea was a very practical person, and she met the problems of our impecunious college in practical ways. The little stucco faculty houses down the hill are an illustration. . . . I think it would have broken Miss Benedict's heart to have built them, and I don't think it bothered Miss McVea at all. They have been eyesores for thirty-five years, but they were desperately needed then . . . and they have been desperately needed ever since, and have certainly justified their existence many times over."

A house was built behind the refectory as a residence for some of the kitchen help and the waitresses. Few today realize that the name Hill House was given to it not because of its location but to honor one of Miss McVea's many heroines, an English woman named Octavia Hill who had ameliorated housing conditions in Britain.

Other small buildings resulted from the flourishing business of teahouse and bookshop. The teahouse, for all its charm, was outgrowing its quarters in the old plantation office. Its needs, coupled with demands for a place for overnight visitors, led to the building of the Boxwood Inn in 1922. In this instance, Miss McVea's "practical ways" were approved; a loan to finance the building, about half its present size, attractive and well-located, was secured by collateral put up by the president herself.

The bookshop now occupied all of the little teahouse building and under the capable management of Miss Ruby Walker, who took it over in 1919, it earned money to fill many a gap. A faculty committee still bore the responsibility for the shop and Miss McLaws, chairman of this committee in 1922, was able to report that in three and a half years more than \$6,000 had been disbursed from its income; the money went to such diverse uses as the building of a gate and fence at the highway entrance, the erection of a hut down the hill behind Academic for



Y.W.C.A. meetings and parties, a welcome and unheralded assistance to the *Briar Patch* which had suffered a deficit, the creation of a summer scholarship of \$150 at Woods Hole for a science student, and an outright gift of \$1,000 to the endowment fund of the college.

Eyes were turned seriously now, not to say gravely, toward the endowment fund. Increased enrollment had brought the operating expenses almost into balance but endowment was needed to satisfy not only the best judgments of the board of directors but also the requirements of associations to which the college belonged. One of the requirements of the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools of the Southern States was that its member institutions should show an endowment of \$500,000, as a minimum.

Far from meeting this condition, Sweet Briar was still selling off acreage of the Williams estate to reduce its debts. Miss McVea had even gone so far as to recommend the sale of all but 1,000 acres of the campus, thus reducing it by nearly two-thirds. The board of directors demurred at this. Instead they authorized Dr. Grammer, Mr. Manson, Mr. Reid, and Miss McVea to hire an agency to direct a campaign in 1920 to raise \$1,000,000 for endowment.

One of the first groups called upon in this endeavor was, of course, the Sweet Briar Alumnae Association. An "alumnae association" had been promptly and optimistically formed when the first five graduates stepped forth; the *Briar Patch* of 1911 solemnly printed the names of its two officers and three members. Non-graduates who departed during the next few years had a club of their own which, at reunion in 1914, joined with the other to form the Association of Alumnae and Former Students of Sweet Briar College. Eugenia Buffington, '13 (Mrs. Russell Walcott) was elected president of this infant alumnae association and in 1914-1915, its six chapters and scattered individual members raised \$10,000 for the endowment fund. There is no indication of what proportion of the money raised in 1920 may have been due to efforts of alumnae

but they did work assiduously soliciting and giving banquets in larger cities.

The agency prepared brochures of information which included, on the dim side, such facts as:

"Sweet Briar has less than \$12,000 endowment."

"The highest paid women-professors, holders of doctor's degrees, receive less than the ticket agent at the Sweet Briar station, and he is not overpaid."

"Last year Sweet Briar turned away one hundred girls prepared for college . . . this year it will turn away more than two hundred such girls" due to lack of dormitory space.

On the bright side was, of course, the fact that there were so many girls eager to come to the college—and the fact that they applied from all parts of the nation:

"Sweet Briar draws more students from sections other than the South than all the other southern colleges of similar academic standing combined." In 1917 Miss McVea had noted that "Sweet Briar has a higher percentage of students from west of the Mississippi than Vassar, Smith or Mt. Holyoke." From its first years the student body had been surprisingly diversified geographically; even in 1908 girls came from Fargo, North Dakota; Ithaca, New York; Hutchinson, Kansas; Chicopee Falls, Massachusetts, and from less distant places and from nearly all of the southern states. By 1920 there were 38 states represented, as well as France and Serbia.

The loyalty of the faculty has always been one of Sweet Briar's strengths: ". . . one of the men teaching at Sweet Briar has refused three different offers," reads one of the campaign pamphlets, "to teach in northern colleges at nearly double his present salary." Other professors had likewise resisted such offers.

The total gift during and after the war from students and faculty to the Students' Friendship War Fund and to the Red Cross was recorded with pride: \$19,500.

In spite of these and other assets described and distributed during the four-month campaign, in spite of Lady Astor's gracious consent to act as Honorary Chairman



of the Greater Sweet Briar Campaign, in spite of eight pages of architects' elegant drawings of a Sweet Briar to accommodate five hundred girls which appeared in two successive issues of the *Briar Patch*, in spite of many man-hours—and woman-hours—of good hard work the total endowment in October 1921 stood at only \$95,000. This was a thorn in the side which destiny decreed should remain for some time.

Money is not necessary for all human endeavor, however, and Miss McVea turned her attention to an ambition she had cherished for some time. When she came to Sweet Briar she had severed connections with some twenty-seven organizations in the city of Cincinnati—overwhelming proof of her conviction that town and gown should not be separated. At Sweet Briar, "town" was represented by Amherst County, and Miss McVea was prepared to embrace the county.

She began by serving on the Council of Safety for the county. Later she organized a current events study group for women of the county. Automobiles were rare and there was no bus service but the women came regularly; they met every month at Sweet Briar House and Miss McVea led the discussions herself. Then, still feeling that college and county needed to know each other better, she instigated an annual event which well adapted itself to the needs and facilities of the parties involved.

The Sweet Briar branch of the A.A.U.W. undertook the actual organization of an "Amherst County Day" and in 1922 Miss McVea wrote to the people of Amherst County: "Sweet Briar wants to know all of you better and Sweet Briar wants you to know the college better. . . . For this college in your county is known and loved all over the country from Texas to Massachusetts and from Virginia to California." She invited them to come to the campus on a day in May for a celebration, and they came—about 400 of them.

There were track and swimming events for boys and

girls; there were contests on compositions submitted in advance from school children (e.g. a prize from the biology department for one "based on observation of any insect or animal life—except the house fly"); there was a prize "offered by President McVea for the best poem by any adult in Amherst County"; there were Sweet Briar girls to watch the little children while their mothers listened to the oratorical contest or heard a speech by a professor from V.P.I.; there were spelling bees, and baby contests judged by Dr. Harley and Dr. Will Walker who held a certificate in veterinary medicine but who, as Dr. Harley said, was "excellent with all small animals."

Amherst County Day was an immediate success. It has continued and altered with changing times. Oratory and poetry have given way to cattle judging, a flower show, and films for entertainment and education.

Interrupted only for a few years by World War II, Amherst County Day is considered a unique enterprise unlikely to be found in any other college in the country. The programs are designed to emphasize education, recreation, health, and agriculture—and an attendance which has totaled 2,000 testifies to its popularity. It drew attention so forcefully to problems of public health that Amherst County became the first county in Virginia to support a service of such scope as the one now carried on in its own Health Center.

Amherst County Day still mingles faculty with county folk, although they now have many other meeting grounds. Today, when some of the faculty live in Amherst and find no hardship in a ten-minute drive to campus, it is hard to realize that the automobiles on campus once numbered only two: Miss McVea's Model-T Ford, chauffeured by Massie who had served at Sweet Briar for a long time, and Mr. Martindale's Buick roadster. Under those circumstances it was difficult for social life to be anything but campus-centered, very much as it was when college opened.

"The Dews and the Worthingtons were the mainstay of the social life of Sweet Briar," says Miss Sparrow. Hugh



Skipworth Worthington had been on the faculty at V.P.I. when Dr. McBryde was working on plans for Sweet Briar. In 1903 or 1904 Mr. Worthington paid a visit to the embryo college in Amherst County, "when Sweet Briar was mostly Sweet Briar House and blackberry bushes." He returned in 1910 as instructor in modern languages. Johns Hopkins later invited him to its faculty but after two years in Baltimore his happy memories of Sweet Briar reinforced an offer to head its department of modern languages; he returned and stayed until his retirement in 1944.

Known to most of the campus as "Pop," Mr. Worthington, with quiet manner and dry humor, was a favorite with the students. As a bridge player and later as a golfer he had a full social life both on campus and in Lynchburg. "The Worthington family began with Nancy Coale, who was described by a neighbor," Miss Sparrow reports, "as 'a real stylish child.' There were three more children, one appearing biennially. All four children were loved and made much of by faculty and students."

Nancy was in the little class which Mrs. Dew taught through its first years of schooling: her own two children, Carolyn Martindale, and Anne Lewis, daughter of Dr. Thomas Lewis who succeeded Dr. Rollins. (Mrs. Dew started them well; all of the girls graduated from Sweet Briar.) "We had a wonderful childhood," Nancy tells us, "thinking we owned the whole three-thousand acre estate. It was our world including the lake. We used to put on May Days, pull each other's hair about who would be queen, and charge the college girls admission to attend! When I had polio and was abed during the whole year of 1922, the class of 1923 was wonderful to me. They taught me to type, to hemstitch voile dresses, play Parcheesi and magnetic jackstraws."

Students were well acquainted with campus families in those days. Almost every *Briar Patch* contained a page or two of snapshots of faculty children, and in 1919 a full page portrait of all the Worthingtons testified to affectionate ties between family and students.

Not only were these junior members of the campus appreciated but the senior professor was one who is vividly remembered by all who knew her. Miss McVea's friend and teacher, Miss Elizabeth Czarnomska who had been lady principal of St. Mary's, had gone out from the girls' school to become a professor in Smith College, then to precede her former pupil, Emilie McVea, as dean of women at the University of Cincinnati. By 1919 she had taught Latin, higher mathematics, German, French literature, history, logic and metaphysics; English literature at Smith, where she was head of the department; Hebrew language and literature at Cincinnati; history of art at Wilson; and she was honorary secretary of the Egypt Exploration Society. She was sixty-nine years old and not in the least inclined to retire. She eagerly accepted Miss McVea's invitation to become professor of Biblical and comparative literature at Sweet Briar.

Miss Czarnomska was descended on her mother's side from an Irish family named Coakley, who had been sugar planters in the West Indies. Her mother, before her death, had founded a girls' school and one of her aunts started two more, one of them at the behest of Bishop Doane on the banks of the Delaware where Indiana Fletcher went soon after its opening. Her father was the brother of a Polish general—Commandant of Warsaw, generalissimo of Italian forces under Carlo Alberto and dear friend of Garibaldi. She was brought up by the adventuresome, poetic, intellectual Irish kin, but Polish military qualities were by no means submerged in her. In fact, Miss Czarnomska seemed to carry only genes that were dominant and they all manifested themselves.

Miss Czarnomska's outstanding attribute was her breathtaking ability to "ride in the whirlwind and direct the storm." Miss Dee Long who joined the faculty at the same time as Miss Czarnomska related this exceptional incident: "One young instructor, asked to hold chapel services one evening, was in the chapel early to finish preparations when she heard someone come up the aisle. Here was



Miss Czarnomska. 'Are you going to talk about St. Jude this evening?' she asked. 'No,' said the instructor, thinking of one good reason why she was not. 'Well, you should. This is St. Jude's Day. I will hold chapel and talk on St. Jude.' As the instructor crept down the steps on one side Miss Czarnomska marched up the steps on the other side, and Sweet Briar did not remain unenlightened about St. Jude."

Miss Czarnomska was not limited to taking over chapel at the last minute, for when Miss McVea's car became stuck in the muddy Lynchburg road she commandeered convict laborers to lift the car and set it over the top of the hill. So great was the power of her imperial manner that she achieved this sitting down—in the tonneau of a model-T.

It is a testimony to Miss McVea's own strength of character that she should have chosen to bring to campus this irresistible force who of course could never think of her as anything but "Emmie," even in faculty meetings. When Miss Czarnomska overrode Sweet Briar tradition by gathering a few upperclassmen in her room for a series of regular and secret meetings, the president had to take the matter up with her. Was this a sorority?—or anything like one? Miss Czarnomska explained to Emmie that she had formed a society of outstanding upperclass girls, named it Tau Phi, and composed a Latin chant for its initiation ceremony. It would be, she said, a nucleus for the chapter of Phi Beta Kappa which would some day be on campus. Tau Phi has endured; its members still sing the Latin chant and they aim to stimulate intellectual pursuits, but its membership is not identical with that of the Phi Beta Kappa chapter.

Miss Czarnomska did not dominate merely to exercise her own will; she was constructive and animating. If she frightened a few of the timid in her classes, she also kindled in others fires of interest that were never extinguished. She was referred to as "The Czar," but in tones of affection as well as respect.

Perhaps Miss McVea not only admired Miss Czarnomska's keen mind and various academic achievements but was also drawn to her for the physical stamina which she herself so sadly lacked. Miss McVea did not coddle herself. On the contrary, if she were able to be up and about she seemed never to think of herself, to concentrate only on her plans and projects and the people about her. For a time she used to stop in at the refectory to eat, or at Miss Mattie's if she happened to be near there, not bothering to run her own table.

But by the year 1923-1924 Miss McVea's health was so poor that she could no longer ignore it; the board voted to give her six months' leave of absence. After two months she optimistically returned to Sweet Briar, but her condition did not satisfy Dr. Harley, who insisted that she live in the infirmary, then located in the Faculty Apartment. So it was to spare her unnecessary fatigue that she called to order in the parlor of the apartment house the first faculty meeting of the year in 1924—her last faculty meeting.

Miss Minna D. Reynolds, then an instructor in the English department, has recorded her memories of that meeting: "Miss McVea presided apparently without effort. . . . At the close Miss McVea said she had something special to say before the meeting was adjourned. Her beautiful voice . . . gave full expression to her words. . . : 'My friends, I am taking leave of you tonight and as a farewell I wish to leave with you the message that *for me religion is the great concern of life.*' She spoke slowly, smiling gravely as she looked at her friends; and one remembered her patience in her ill health, her intense interest in the chapel services, and most of all her remarkable power when she held the service of evoking the true spirit of devotion."

This power had been appreciated by the students, too. Her chapel services were willingly attended, and she gave her whole soul to planning them. Miss Howland tells of finding her at the piano in her living room selecting hymns for the service. She picked out the melodies with difficulty and she sang the words a bit off-key but she would say with



feeling, "Aren't they beautiful! I can't sing, but something flows from them into me as I try."

Some of the prayers she wrote are still used in chapel, and the quality of the woman is still feelingly remembered by those who knew her. Two of her friends suggest that these lines well describe her:

"Through the hands of such as these God speaks, and from behind their eyes He smiles upon the earth."

Emilie McVea's spiritual sensitiveness, her lack of thought for herself, and her passion for justice resulted in a person who could inspire others. Perhaps it can be said that where the first president had been chiefly a builder with a precise mind, who gave great thought to the plans for building and infinite care to each detail, the second president functioned predominantly as a catalyst. She was endowed with a contagious impulsiveness that started events moving. The direction and extent of movement were not always strictly controlled; sometimes, it must be admitted, things went astray from the generally conceived character of the college. The stucco faculty houses are one example; the president's suggestion to sell 2,000 acres of the campus, her enthusiasm for uniting Sweet Briar with the University of Virginia are others. Either of the latter moves would have drastically changed the character of the college but she was eager to solve problems and would sometimes advocate the first means for solution that presented itself.

On other occasions her propensity for immediate action could be most effective, as for instance the night when a Christmas tree caught fire during a tableau in the chapel. Dr. Will Walker started toward the blazing tree and Miss McVea rose at once from her seat, turned to the audience and quietly but audibly to even those in the back row said, "Everyone will remain seated. Dr. Will will take charge." No one moved; Dr. Will extinguished the flames with his hands; the actresses in the tableau did not know until afterwards what had happened.

Miss McVea's abilities gave the board of directors reason to sum up her contributions to Sweet Briar by noting that when she came, "in some quarters there were discouragement; abroad there was a spirit of criticism; within the college were divided loyalties and opposing policies. The success of the enterprise still hung in the balance. . . . The college stands [at the end of her administration] in the first rank, and has an assured future with its harmoniously working staff and loyal students and alumnae.

"The determining factor in this transformation and advance has undoubtedly been the courage, good judgment and power of administration of President McVea. . . . She has lifted from the shoulders of the Directors the burden of anxiety, and has carried them along with her enthusiastically in her plans for the development of the institution."

Within a month after the faculty meeting described above Mr. Manson died. His death was a shock and a sharp loss to the whole college and especially to the president. A few days later she suffered a severe heart attack and the college never saw her again as its president. When she was sufficiently recovered to travel she was taken to Raleigh. There in the surroundings she loved, the care of friends and relatives enabled her to recover sufficiently to re-enter the academic world. Deliberately setting aside her natural interests in administration she adapted herself to life as it was given to her; she went to Winter Park, Florida, and became part-time professor of English literature at Rollins College. During her two years at Winter Park she was able, with her wings clipped, as it were, to win from those who knew her teaching, the label of "inspiring."

At last death came to her in July 1928. Sweet Briar honored her at its Founders' Day program in October of that year when Dr. Harley, Professor Martin Fischer from Cincinnati, Mr. Reid, and President Hamilton Holt of Rollins College joined in telling students who had never known Emilie Watts McVea how much their college owed to this generous, outgoing woman.



Professor Fischer ended his memorial to her by calling to mind an inscription graven above the door of a sea captain's home: "To sail is necessary; to live is not necessary." "In that spirit," he concluded, "and with that courage, I would say, Emilie McVea used to sail into life's ocean—and in that spirit, too, she failed one day to return."

CHAPTER VI

*Coming of Age*

1925-1946

ON THE MORNING OF FRIDAY, November 13, 1925, the Sweet Briar chapel was filled to overflowing. An expectant silence fell on the assembly as the Tannhäuser March swelled from the organ and announced the solemn entry of an academic procession made unusually colorful by the varying hoods of delegates from nearly eighty sister colleges and universities. The occasion was the inauguration of the third president of Sweet Briar College, Meta Glass.

After President William Allan Neilson of Smith College delivered greetings from the women's colleges and President Dice Robins Anderson of Randolph-Macon Woman's College saluted Sweet Briar on behalf of the colleges of Virginia, the chief address of the day was given by Bryn Mawr's President Marion Park. Then Dr. Carl Grammer, president of the board of directors, inducted into office the new president.

Miss Glass and Sweet Briar had shared for many years the atmosphere of the Virginia piedmont. Their paths had briefly touched time and again; they had cast glances at each other from the corner of the eye, but decades rolled by before their careers found themselves at last in phase.

As a small girl Meta Glass, the youngest of Major Robert Henry Glass's twelve children, had celebrated the occasions when snow covered Lynchburg by coasting on Fletcher's Hill, one of Elijah's early holdings in Lynchburg. She had attended St. Paul's Church which Elijah had helped to build and where Miss Indie had married Henry Williams. There the future Sweet Briar president had her first encounters with members of the board of directors, encounters of an ecclesiastical rather than educational nature: the



Reverend Mr. Carson had christened a four-year-old Meta Glass, proud of her plaid silk dress new for the occasion, and Bishop Randolph had confirmed her in the same church. And later it would have been possible for her to have known Miss Indie for they both lived in Lynchburg during Miss Indie's last winters; but they never met.

After graduating from Randolph-Macon Woman's College in Lynchburg Miss Glass taught for a year in the Wytheville Female Seminary—"everything from Shakespeare to copy book writing." She taught for a year in a seminary at Mt. Sterling, Kentucky; then she instructed in German at Randolph-Macon. And one summer afternoon in 1906 she made "an all-afternoon's jaunt from Lynchburg in a surrey with fringe to interview President Benedict at Sweet Briar about a job there. 'Nothing available,' was the answer."

Miss Glass's experience in teaching Latin, among other things, during four years at the Roanoke High School turned her to the classics, and by 1912 she had earned her Ph.D. degree from Columbia University in Latin and Greek, although she had entered graduate school with no knowledge whatever of Greek. In the next four years while she was a member of the classics department at Randolph-Macon Miss Glass made a number of visits to Sweet Briar, driving out with her family when they went to see her niece, Margaret Banister, who was a student there.

With the outbreak of war in 1917 Miss Glass went to France. In behalf of the Y.W.C.A. she used her ability for organization and administration, first in forming nurses' clubs in many parts of the country, later in heading in Paris a Training School for European Women who wanted to know more about social service work.

On her return to America she found simultaneous employment for her talents in administration and in teaching by assisting the director of University Extension at Columbia University and serving as assistant professor of Latin. While she was at Columbia she received an invitation from President McVea of Sweet Briar to become dean of

the college. But Miss Glass liked her life and work in New York and was moved to reply that she was not available. Nonetheless, Miss McVea had a deep feeling that Miss Glass and Sweet Briar were meant for each other and when her own health began to fail she tried again to make the match. She expressed to the board her preference for Miss Glass as her successor.

Dr. Grammer, by that time a seasoned interviewer of candidates for a college presidency, went to New York to see Miss Glass. "We had a fine day," she recalls with a smile. "We rode all the way up town and back on a Fifth Avenue bus; we went into the Metropolitan Museum—I guess he wanted to see how I reacted to culture. Then he took me to dinner.

"I liked Dr. Grammer immensely. He was a liberal clergyman who was *au courant* with affairs of the world. He liked people and he liked fun; there were little light places in him. And he had an unfailing belief in and desire for Sweet Briar. He had definite feelings about its having a high academic standing, and about its administration: his idea was that educational matters should be decided by the president, the dean, and the faculty who should then simply inform the board. He did not want to see a committee on curriculum or instruction on the board, for his experience has led him to feel that such a committee was just a rubber stamp."

Dr. Grammer willingly confirmed Miss McVea's judgment of Miss Glass, and this time when she was invited back to Virginia she came.

"My administration was largely occupied with adjustments and digestion of the rapid growth preceding it," was Miss Glass's characterization of her regime. "The tasks seemed to be to increase the number of faculty members and to remedy as rapidly as possible . . . their inadequate salaries; to provide a library adequate both in books and building . . . ; to bring to efficiency . . . work in the sciences; to raise an endowment to furnish a measure of security in these expensive developments; to lead the college out



into the world in an increased degree . . . ; to find housing and playing fields for physical education . . . ; to bring Sweet Briar students into the currents of the life of student organizations in this country and abroad; to find ways and means for student assistance by scholarships and remunerative work on a country campus."

But an obstruction loomed in the foreground of all paths towards a gratifying future for Sweet Briar—the treasurer's report, monotonously revealing a lack of substantial income from endowment. Without that important asset there could be no increase in faculty salaries, no thought of a bigger library or superior scientific equipment. There was already a debt of nearly \$250,000 incurred by the recent building program.

Obviously a proficiency in financial management would be most welcome in a new president. When asked recently what knowledge on this subject she brought to the position Miss Glass's reply was: "I came to Sweet Briar not knowing a thing about money, dreaded talking about it, never had made out a budget. I couldn't even remember the salaries of the jobs I had had; I only knew that I had earned little enough and lived on less.

"The only experience I had had with investments came from four shares of stock that I inherited during World War I. All that did was to ruin my judgment. It paid 16%. One day at a board meeting at Sweet Briar somebody was recommending a stock because it paid 8% and I said, 'Who in the world wants to bother with 8%?'

"And I never thought I could ask for money."

Fortunately, however, this classical scholar brought to the tasks confronting her more than her ability to write a dissertation on "The Fusion of Stylistic Elements in Virgil's *Georgics*"—albeit, elements of style were ever one of her assets. She had tested herself in a sufficient variety of employment to go ahead with confidence even though, as she admits in the story above, some of this confidence was founded on ignorance.

Miss Glass liked to learn and she soon learned about finances. Her first budget was highly complimented by one of the board members; she started to acquire an objectivity towards asking for money, and by the end of her first year she had attracted a few gifts. Endowment then stood at \$132,947.

She focused her efforts on the goals which appeared to her of prime importance, goals which were deeply meshed with the financial structure of the college. "I wanted to clear the debt Sweet Briar had, and not contract any more. I did not think we should have a new dormitory, which some people wanted, until facilities were top for students who were already there. So I concentrated on faculty, books, and equipment—no splurging on building."

Fortunately there was no immediate need to splurge on building. Miss Glass was able to start her administration with a new office in a new building, Fletcher Hall. Offices of the staff were on the first floor, class rooms and faculty offices on the two upper floors. And there was a new dormitory, named to honor Mr. Reid. It was sixth of the seven dormitories originally planned for the college. Besides accommodating 88 more students it provided an extra kitchen and a dining room where all freshmen could be served together.

These buildings and the four new stucco houses on Faculty Row had created an indebtedness which in 1926 exceeded the endowment by \$97,000. This challenged the president to budget with utmost care so that year by year the surplus above operating expenses could be applied to the debt and, once that was retired, to the endowment. But a more decisive step to increase endowment was taken in 1928 when a nationwide campaign was authorized by the board. The goal was \$375,000 for endowment and \$375,000 for a new auditorium and gymnasium. The hope was that most of the money could be realized from foundations and individuals able to contribute large sums.

The drive was compartmentalized into different campaigns among different groups: friends outside the college,



alumnae, students, board, faculty, and even the waitresses in the dining room, who at that time did not include students. And the colored employees asked to have their own campaign among "The Colored Founders of Sweet Briar," all of whom contributed.

Publicity for this campaign was voluminous. For the first time, Sweet Briar had a publicity director, a professional newspaper woman who stayed for one semester. She succeeded in having the smiling face of Katherine Brightbill, '28, treasurer of the student campaign, appear under the caption "Desires a Million" in papers from Lowell, Massachusetts, to Hollywood, California. The rotogravure of the *New York Herald-Tribune* showed Virginia Lee Taylor, '26, and Edna Lee, '26, with Commander Richard E. Byrd who addressed the banquet at the Hotel Biltmore given by Sweet Briar alumnae. Papers in Cleveland, Duluth, Wilkes-Barre and many other cities carried stories of the Sweet Briar campaign, often with pictures of alumnae wearing long-waisted evening dresses and light stockings. Paramount News photographed the May Day celebration, but no one saw the pictures for the film was ruined in a laboratory accident.

Unfortunately, the time was not yet ripe for Sweet Briar to seek such sums. Substantial donations were not forthcoming. But the college took heart from the fact that every group connected directly with it had responded handsomely. The alumnae shone. Margaret Banister, '16 was president of the alumnae association and Katherine Blount, '26, was national alumnae director of the campaign. They appointed field directors for different areas of the country and in 54 cities various social functions brought together friends of Sweet Briar. The final result was that the alumnae association exceeded its goal of \$100,000 by \$5,000.

The students, who had been assigned the same quota, worked doggedly. With characteristic imaginativeness of students, they employed ingenuity in bringing in nickels and dimes and quarters; they painted cartoons on slickers, cut each other's hair, conducted classes in reducing exer-

cises, and one girl sold a new type of toothbrush invented by her father. Income from these projects and cash gifts from those who could afford them brought more than \$115,000.

If the campaign revealed that Sweet Briar had yet to make its name better known in the world it was deeply gratifying that the people who did know the college responded to its needs. It was also proof of the effectiveness of the alumnae association.

In 1926 the alumnae had for the first time a secretary on campus, Katharyn Norris, '26 (now Mrs. Stillman F. Kelley, II) who gave only part time to the job. The next year she worked full time for the association and began the organization of records so necessary for such an office.

In 1929 she was succeeded by Vivienne Barkalow Breckenridge, '18 (now Mrs. Stanley Hornbeck) who operated what was in all probability the only alumnae office in the country located in a slave cabin. The last of the cabins, the one behind Sweet Briar House, became the center of alumnae activities. Mrs. Breckenridge, an assiduous worker herself, soon goaded alumnae into saving hundreds of thousands of soap coupons which were converted into an addressograph for the new office. She also recognized the need for a more active and continuing program of alumnae gifts to Sweet Briar. The old plan of receiving sums for life memberships in the association often had the effect of shutting off completely further interest in finances of the college. Following other private liberal arts colleges, the Sweet Briar Alumnae Association turned to the establishment of an annual giving program, an alumnae fund to use for current expenses. In 1934 the first fund totaled \$2,000 and it has increased steadily until in 1955 it surpassed \$22,000. This fund, of course, did not affect endowment.

In 1929 the need for endowment became urgent, for the accrediting of the college was in question. The Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools of the Southern States had placed Sweet Briar on its conditional list because en-



dowment did not reach the minimum required for qualification in the Association, which was \$500,000 over and above indebtedness for an institution with 100 students, and a higher sum for larger institutions. Also the Association did not count as endowment real estate or houses—which the college had listed among its assets. Recalculations on these terms brought to light the dismal fact that Sweet Briar needed \$800,000 and it could show only \$87,000 in assets acceptable to the Association.

Miss Glass commented frankly to the board on the situation: "I am convinced that the set-back to Sweet Briar's prestige and the future prosperity and reputation of the college would be a most serious one [if the Association dropped it]. Should the college be dropped, it would take longer to obliterate this from the minds of the public even after it had been reinstated again, than perhaps it would take to raise the endowment to the necessary figure."

The significance of Miss Glass's warning was recognized by all, but it had come at a time which was especially unfavorable to act on it: it was a part of the president's report of May 1929, on the eve of the stock market crash.

Earlier in 1929, however, the college had occasion to rejoice. For some years, the library, for want of better quarters, had been tucked into the hut originally built for the Y.W.C.A. during World War I. It was a spot which rouses tender memories in many who knew it. Miss Long recalled the fireplace, the sun pouring in the windows, the "intimacy with the books . . . all about you, waiting to be picked up and read. No permit [was] necessary to visit stacks. . . . On Sunday evening, sometimes, a group of students and an invited member of the faculty would gather there for readings . . . around the fireplace."

But Miss Glass entertained no sentiment for a building which was not truly serving its purpose. Five of the departmental libraries had to be housed elsewhere, and the remaining books occupied so much space that very few students could sit down and read them there. Miss Glass crisply reported to the board "I have renamed the building

The Little Beggar and I sincerely trust that she may have success in her calling, and that soon."

Perhaps it was this plea which touched a responsive note in Mr. Fergus Reid, who admired Miss Glass as much as she admired him. Mr. Reid was a cultivated business man who never presumed to have a special knowledge about education, but for thirty-six years he was one of the mainstays of the board and he took deep pride in Sweet Briar. "No one really knows how generous he was to her," said Miss Glass. "Once when we were starting to raise money he gave \$50,000 'to start things with'. . . . He often lent money and later refused payment."

Confronted with Miss Glass's "Little Beggar" he chose to give Sweet Briar a library in memory of his mother, Mary Helen Cochran. No gift could have been more timely nor welcome in and of itself, but it was doubly appreciated by a board which acknowledged its gratefulness to Mr. Reid's material gifts "as convincing evidence of his belief in the value of education for women," and its personal admiration of "his sound judgment, his sweet reasonableness and his kindly sense of humor."

The prospect of a new library heartened the campus, and the president threw herself eagerly into consultations on the drawing of plans. She was particularly eager that the lighting should be good and, in her own words, "M.G. had to do the investigating and the talking to salesmen on such slim knowledge that she succeeded in being included in an all-day indoctrination session being held for salesmen of lighting fixtures somewhere in New Jersey. When asked her district by one of the others, she claimed 'the South,' with an air, and got by with it."

It was a happy day when the handsome Georgian library was opened in October 1929 and The Little Beggar was hauled away—"by two men who hitched it to a mule with a shoestring" according to Miss Glass's airy description, although others have an impression that it was "an inch-by-inch performance." It was set on another foundation near the beginning of Elijah's Road to shelter the music department and, especially, practicing musicians whose assiduity



had long created distraction in the basement of one of the dormitories. It began to be called The Music Box—and soon conversation again focused on how little and inadequate it was.

Miss Glass had attracted other useful gifts to the college. During the first five years or so of her administration she had concentrated on doing first things first. Faculty and finances were seriously reckoned with, a library was built, and furthermore it was being filled with carefully selected books. Between 1928 and 1932 the Carnegie Corporation gave \$28,000 which resulted in an increase of the library's volumes from 20,000 to 30,000.

Miss Doris Lomer was the first librarian of the Mary Helen Cochran Library. Under her guidance, the book collection attained a degree of excellence which brought it into favorable comparison with libraries of far larger and older colleges. Miss Lomer's brother was the librarian of McGill University and she had served there under him. Besides this useful experience, Miss Lomer brought with her also a rare knowledge of literature in general.

The Shaw List for college libraries was closely followed and a high proportion of titles in it are in the Mary Helen Cochran Library. Most suggestions for books, however, come from the faculty, and the largest part of the budget goes into specialized fields. In 1955 there were 85,000 volumes and, lamented one of the librarians, "no dead wood; there is nothing we can discard although the stacks are almost full. But of course that means that it is a good library!" At present from five to six thousand dollars are spent annually on books.

The Carnegie Corporation further manifested approval of the college and encouragement to its work by making available \$16,000 to develop the study of the arts. Miss Florence Robinson of the classics department became head of the art department and, with the aid of the Carnegie grant, began to build up collections of slides and pictures. A strengthening and expansion of facilities for teaching art history was the trend in liberal arts colleges and Sweet

Briar was thus enabled to follow that line, an especially expensive one in its early stages. Traveling exhibits, and the college's own purchases from time to time of pictures and prints of top quality began to awaken the campus to an appreciation of art which formerly tended to be limited to those enrolled in the art department.

The music department likewise profited from the Carnegie gift: a library of records and scores and an excellent record-player vastly extended possibilities for instruction in music history and appreciation. The Corporation paid the salaries of two musicians to give instrumental instruction and to encourage interest in the small but enthusiastic ensemble. These additions in facilities and instruction made it possible to offer a major in music.

Also from the Corporation came the salary for a new member of the department of English to instruct in speech and drama. And to provide a stimulus in all the arts, in 1932-1933 Mr. Percy MacKaye was poet-in-residence. He directed two of his own dramas which were of such magnitude that more students than ever before had a chance to participate in dramatic production; musicians, dancers, and art students as well as actors were employed. *Sanctuary: A Bird Masque*, was given in 1933 in the natural amphitheater of the east dell for the entertainment of the May Queen and her guests and to many hundreds of spectators it was a memorable event. Even the Southern Railway bowed to art by repressing train whistles on the afternoon of the performance.

In spite of Miss Glass's reluctance to initiate a building program, she found herself presiding over one. In 1929 a building to meet several needs was erected across the road from the Inn. The post office finally had a home, with Professor Preston H. Edwards of the physics department as post master; space was provided for four new faculty apartments; and the bookshop was at last well housed. This enterprise, which had flourished from the day of its founding had yielded the funds for this building and was, as well, furnishing several scholarships each year and a



loan fund for students. The bookshop was more than a material asset, however, and in its new quarters it provided a constant invitation to reading, with its attractive displays and inviting corners in which one could drop down and peruse new books.

The continuing success of the shop has been due not only to its good managers but also to the faculty committee responsible for its guidance. A truly devoted member of this committee and chairman of it for nearly twenty-five years was Miss Jessie Fraser. One of Miss Fraser's particular interests was to stimulate students to collect libraries of their own. To this end the bookshop committee annually offered a prize—of books, naturally—for the best student collection. At faculty meetings when Miss Fraser was to speak for the committee she gave her report special dignity by the unaccustomed donning of a hat, an item of apparel rarely used on campus. Wearing a large, soft beret of black velvet and speaking with precise articulation in a resonant southern voice Miss Fraser would impressively bring the faculty up to date on the bookshop.

There was another, larger building constructed during Miss Glass's regime. As a result of the campaign of 1928 it was possible to consider erecting a gymnasium. Most of the money for it (\$82,000) had been raised by students inspired by leaders of the Athletic Association. Since 1923 they had pledged and earned and contributed sums large and small. After the senior play, *Smilin' Through*, staged in the boxwood gardens in 1923, a plaque of the Sweet Briar seal was sold at auction for \$12. This began the fund for the gymnasium. Although there were few outside gifts and none of these over \$1,000, a comparatively small amount was required from the college to complete the total cost.

Miss Harriet Rogers, who came as director of physical education in 1924, not only had supported the fund drive in many ways but she had spent endless hours of research and planning on the building. She shared the satisfaction of all the students and alumnae who had worked for it

when in June 1931 the cornerstone was laid and the Daisy Williams Gymnasium was presented to the college by Katharyn Norris, who had been one of the student chairmen of the fund drive.

Signora Hollins, who had been Daisy's playmate, took part in the ceremony. She spoke with dignity of her memories of "Miss Daisy" and presented to the library a book which Daisy had given her. In the entrance hall of the new building was hung a bronze medallion about sixteen inches in diameter, a relief of little Daisy which had made a most unexpected appearance. Miss Glass said, "It was found, literally, just after the students had decided to name the building for her. Mrs. Martindale—then Miss Dix—was cleaning out an understairs closet and found it mounted on a red velvet background, much moth-eaten, and in a frame. Those who remember Miss Dix's cleaning (she came to Sweet Briar the year college opened and since 1918 had been Supervisor of Halls of Residence) would hardly have believed that anything could have escaped her, but she said she never remembered seeing the medallion before. I could think of no explanation of its appearance except that Miss Indie had sent it in appreciation."

Before any of these new buildings were added to the college, on a day in March 1927 there was a near-tragedy to the most treasured old one, Sweet Briar House. At about ten o'clock in the morning Miss Ruby Walker, at work in her bookshop which was in the cottage beside Sweet Briar House, was horrified to see smoke pouring through the lattice work under the back porch of the house. She slammed the cash drawer shut, ran to the telephone in the hall of the house to report the fire, hurried into the east tower to rouse the faculty who lived there, then she rushed back downstairs, seized a large silver tray and hurtled out.

Men on campus feverishly operated the college fire-fighting equipment and with the help of students removed what they could from the house. They were soon joined by fire departments from Amherst and Lynchburg, but



with everybody's best efforts it was three hours before the fire was quenched.

Miss Glass's customary vividness appears in her account of the event: "The two most exciting incidents of the fire seemed to have been the throwing of the president's clothes out of the west windows of her room, and the salvage of all Miss Czarnomska's possessions, except for one overshoe, from the east side of the house. The manuscript of the second volume of her *Authentic Literature of Israel* was there and she was prevented from going upstairs for it only by my holding her while two of the professors scaled the walls and brought out not only that, but every ornament and souvenir of a long life of travel."

Fortunately, no one had been injured and not a bush of boxwood had been burned. By September the house was rebuilt and surprisingly well furnished from pieces that had been salvaged and repaired, augmented by furniture which had been stored in the basement or was in use elsewhere on campus. Good photographs of the interior guided an expert restoration of the woodwork.

The calamity had been the occasion for a visit on the evening of the fire from earlier residents of Sweet Briar House. "The night was brightened by a full moon. An instructor had gone over to see how the burned house looked by moonlight. As she stood by the sundial in the boxwood circle, she saw a woman and a little girl slowly approach the house, hand in hand, from the garden on the left of the house. They stood for a moment and surveyed the ruin, then . . . they climbed the steps, passed through the burned doorway, and entered the front hall. The amazed spectator followed quickly to the place where they had disappeared, but no one was there.

"Later in the evening two students, also watching from the circle and ignorant of the earlier appearance, saw a woman and a small girl, hand in hand, come out of the doorway, descend the steps, and disappear into the garden. This is the first and only time reported that Daisy and her mother have returned together to the home where they saw so much happiness and grief."

This account was published in the *Sweet Briar News*. It must be so.

Miss Indie's ghost has long been known to hover near the seventh step of the front stairs in Sweet Briar House to protect her former possessions. No less reliable a person than Miss Long tells that "Miss Czarnomska, going down the front stairs one evening, fell at the seventh step. After a moment of unconsciousness she opened her eyes and said to those trying to lift her up, 'Miss Indie tripped me in revenge; I broke one of her teacups today.'"

Miss Glass was not averse to sharing Sweet Briar House with whatever ghosts cared to visit her, but she had little time to invite their appearance. The depression of the 1930's brought her other things to think of.

The first result of the crash of the stock market in 1929 was for Sweet Briar the opposite of disaster: for the session starting in September 1930 the college received the greatest number of applications in its history. Of the 770 candidates for admission 209 were admitted, the largest freshman class to date. Perhaps this flood of applications was due in part to the fact that the \$800 fee of Sweet Briar was more attractive than the \$1,000 fee which then prevailed in older and larger women's colleges, but it was also true that Sweet Briar's prestige was growing and its reputation spreading. In any case, in 1931 there were 647 applicants and 217 were admitted. It is customary in colleges to accept more students than can actually be accommodated, as some inevitably drop out in the summer, but in those two years the expected number of summer withdrawals proved after all not to be inevitable. When college opened in the fall of 1930 dormitories were bursting and every available room within walking distance of the college was filled.

Tuition had to be raised to \$1,000, however, for the year 1931-1932 and by the end of that year handwriting on the wall indicated that college would not have a full complement of students by September 1932; there were only 292



applications in, as against the 647 of the previous year.

The president met the board in May 1932 with three budgets prepared to fit different conditions which might arise; the budget based on the most dismal eventuality called for a reduction of faculty salaries up to 2%. Miss Glass has said that during her administration there was only one disagreement between her and the board—and this was the occasion of it. "I was proud of what it was about," she said. "Dr. Grammer heard my recommendation and then he said, 'Let's not vote on this. I don't want us to go on record as even considering a cut in faculty salaries. If we have to in the fall we will.'"

When fall came all the dormitory rooms but twelve were occupied and faculty salaries did not have to be cut. At the end of that year, however—in May 1933—the situation was graver. The halls were full but nearly \$22,000 had been used for scholarship aid to students; about a third of the girls were earning part of their way, in any manner they could. The previous year students had for the first time been permitted to be waitresses in the college dining halls; others engaged in all the odd jobs that young people think of, from shampooing hair to closing windows and turning on radiators on wintry mornings for lethargic and affluent friends.

The retirement of the college debt, tantalizingly in sight within two normal years, was suddenly removed to an indefinite future date when a deficit showed in operating expenses.

While one part of the administration was occupied with financial problems, another part had other concerns. Just before the advent of Miss Glass, due to President McVea's illness there had been no president on campus. Emily Helen Dutton, herself a classicist, had come in 1923 as dean—a graduate of Mount Holyoke College with the further degrees of master of arts from Radcliffe and doctor of philosophy from the University of Chicago. She had had a long and successful teaching experience and was an able administrator, but her first years after coming to Sweet

Briar from Tennessee College would have daunted a less courageous spirit. By 1924 she found herself in effect acting president, yet without the official authority which actual appointment to that post would have conferred.

Nearly all of the faculty and some of the students had more background of Sweet Briar experience than the new dean had, when so much was suddenly demanded of her. The executive committee of the faculty was of great help, with such standbys as Mr. Worthington, Miss Morenus, Miss Sparrow, and Mr. McDougale. Miss Dutton herself was decidedly resourceful, and she was the kind of person who spontaneously gave her best. By their combined efforts they weathered the difficult situation in which post-war social changes had combined with the lack of well-defined presidential command to produce student unrest. When Miss Glass came the following year, Dean Dutton had reason to welcome one who would not only fill the chair of the president but bring to it real qualities of leadership.

The president in turn appreciated Dean Dutton's special qualities. "She was," said Miss Glass, "energetic, gracious, and eminently interested in people more than things. . . . She could even enjoy people in large gatherings. She remembered their conversations, remembered their relations, their activities and she was genuinely concerned about what they wanted, what they liked, and whether they got it.

"She was a person of direct questions. You might say, and I have heard people say, that she was curious. No, she literally cared about causes and people, and she did not hesitate to ask about things that she cared about."

She cared very much about Sweet Briar, and she and Miss Glass understood and respected each other as they worked together for this college whose cause they had lately espoused.

In the first few years of Miss Glass's presidency there were among students causes for several severe disciplinary actions, but Miss Glass and Miss Dutton were of one mind against adopting an authoritarian policy. Miss Glass fully subscribed to an observation by the dean: "Student Gov-



ernment has the difficulties that it will always have so long as it is the nature of youth to think far more of its rights and privileges than of its responsibilities, but in an institution of this type student government in the matters under its jurisdiction is infinitely to be preferred to faculty government. . . ."

By the end of her fourth year at Sweet Briar Miss Glass was able to remark that morale among students was high and the year had seen no disciplinary cases of marked seriousness. She had also been able to remove one of the great temptations for misdoing and evasion. Miss Gay Patteson, long retired but always interested in campus life, came to the president's office one day and said, "I want to make an impertinent request. I hear that the most animated conversations among our students take place down at Bus Rhea's. I think we ought to have those discussions right in our midst, but as long as the girls have to leave campus to smoke, Bus's yard is going to be the college forum. I think we ought to have smoking on campus!"

This appealed to the president. "I submitted this suggestion to the faculty who agreed at once," she said, "and set some guiding rules of where and when. I announced the decision at a convocation—a surprise indeed—and the roof nearly went off!"

Elijah's Road is the name given in the early thirties to what was in plantation days the only route to Amherst. When Miss Glass came as president there was on it only the Boxwood Inn, and farther out a few small old wooden buildings strung along the unimproved dirt road. By the time the music building came to rest on Elijah's Road in 1929, the first faculty home, Red Top, was sitting new and exposed where the road plunged into the oak forest bordering the north edge of campus. Miss Lucy Crawford and Miss Harriet Rogers had received a permit in 1928 to build Red Top, and the next year Miss Mattie and Miss Gay Patteson were granted permission to build across from The Music Box. Their plan was one to delight a president harassed with insufficient living quarters for a

growing faculty: they wanted to have several apartments in their house and planned to bequeath it eventually to the college. They called it The Venture, but in recent years it has been renamed Patteson House in grateful memory of the two sisters.

Miss Marion Benedict (now Mrs. Wallace Rollins) soon built her home just beyond The Venture and next to it the Misses Ethel and Sarah Thorpe Ramage erected Windy Mead. This was the beginning of a wide spread of "population"; the days were gone when faculty and student body were closely concentrated in Faculty Row and the nearby dormitories.

When Miss Glass came in 1925 there were only 32 members of the faculty. True to her ambition she started at once to add to this number; in less than ten years she had invited a score of teachers and scholars, who are either still on the faculty or who have retired from it recently. This group brought a vitality and loyalty which has been invaluable, not only academically but to the spirit of the college community.

In this group were Miss Jessie Fraser, Mrs. Dora Neill Raymond, Miss Belle Boone Beard and Miss Gladys Boone in history and social studies; Dr. Carl Connor, Miss Ethel Ramage, and Miss Johanne Stochholm in English; Mme. Cecile Johnson and Dr. Joseph E. Barker in the French department; Miss Mary J. Pearl and Miss Gertrude Malz in the classics; Miss Marion Benedict in religion; Miss Florence Robinson, who came to teach Latin and later became head of the art department. Miss Helen Mull and Miss Elisabeth Möller took over the courses in psychology; Dr. Preston H. Edwards taught physics, Miss Florence Hague, biology, and Miss Miriam Weaver, music.

Almost all of this group were doctors of philosophy but students tend to honor only men with the title. Even the president is rarely accorded hers.

The one woman consistently addressed as "doctor" is Mary Harley, M.D. For the last ten years of her service at Sweet Briar—from 1925 to 1935—Dr. Harley resided in the attractive new infirmary set on the hill which slopes



from the dormitories down to Faculty Row. The infirmary was the gift of several people, but Dr. Harley herself was the chief donor. There, as in the makeshift quarters occupied earlier, she gave bed-patients the most considerate attention and excellent care, skillfully bound sprained ankles, impatiently painted poison ivy victims and, if student exaggerations are to be believed, enthusiastically administered castor oil to all comers.

In 1935 Dr. Harley retired, the last of the original faculty of 1906. But it was far from being the last of Dr. Harley. Her feeling was, "You can do anything in the world if you really want to. If you want to travel, reduce your baggage to a minimum, pack up and go. People are nice to you everywhere." She did pack up and go. She studied anthropology from Hawaii to South Africa to New York, later returning to Pretoria to chip fossils with Dr. Robert Broom in the Transvaal Museum. In recent years Dr. Harley has been living again at Sweet Briar with her old friends, the Walkers. As one after another of the big family left, the Walkers had moved into a smaller home which they built between Sweet Briar and their old home, St. Angelo.

On the whole, those years of the early thirties which were difficult indeed for many colleges treated Sweet Briar well. The single deficit was under \$3,000. That *bête noire*, the miniature endowment, was an unexpected blessing: having no substantial income from investments Sweet Briar did not suffer from a sudden cessation of a significant portion of its income, as did the well-endowed colleges. No faculty salaries were decreased nor were any of the faculty dropped. Three who received promotions in 1933 had to forego temporarily the usual emolument, but that was not difficult at a time when many in other institutions were being dismissed because of lack of funds.

There were also various kinds of heartening recognition that came in the midst of depression years. Of primary significance, the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools decided to recognize existing merit and,

perhaps due to the depression, made its specification for endowment less strict. It granted unconditional membership to Sweet Briar College.

There is no doubt that this move was strongly influenced by the calibre of Sweet Briar's leadership. Both Miss Glass and Miss Dutton had a sound reputation in the academic world. A young instructor considering an invitation to Sweet Briar had once consulted a member of the faculty of Mount Holyoke who said, "Emily Dutton is down there and I know she wouldn't stay if it weren't a good place." Miss Dutton was ever concerned with standards of scholarship and served for some years as chairman of the national committee on standards in the American Association of University Women.

And in 1933 Miss Glass was elected national president of the A.A.U.W. In that capacity she made many public appearances and four times went to Europe on business of the association. Through its president Sweet Briar thus became familiar to a widening group of people, "from Vermont to Louisiana, from Norfolk to Los Angeles," as Miss Glass referred to her travels in this country. When Dean Gildersleeve of Barnard College describes "many a good crusade" in which she has participated, Meta Glass often enters the pages as her colleague. She mentions how "in one of the most delicate diplomatic jobs I ever tackled" in the International Federation of University Women "Meta Glass of the American Association" (then its president) gave great assistance. A few years later, when Hitler's policies were working havoc with university women's organizations in central Europe, Miss Glass, as chairman of the finance committee of the International Federation, played a key role in the allocation of special grants for refugee university women. When the Navy called upon the administrators of certain women's colleges to work out plans for the organization that finally emerged as the WAVES, Miss Gildersleeve became chairman and Miss Glass vice-chairman of the Advisory Council. Miss Glass, on the other hand, chaired the committee of the American Council on Education to deal with the mobilization of



woman power on the higher educational levels. "Miss Glass and I have served on many a committee together," writes Miss Gildersleeve. "Sometimes she has been chairman and sometimes I have been, but always we have worked in happy confidence and companionship. She is one of the ablest and wisest women I have known, and she has also that charm peculiar to nice Virginians."

Numerous other organizations of national scope have claimed Miss Glass's services, such as the American Council on Teacher Education, National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War, National Woman's Committee on Mobilization for Human Need, The People's Mandate to Governments to End War, National Advisory Council on Radio and Education, and the Committee on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure of the Association of American Colleges.

Meanwhile, Miss Glass had received a different kind of recognition at various times during her administration through honorary degrees from eight colleges and universities. Deciding what hood to wear on special occasions must have become a delightful perplexity to one who never selected any garment casually.

Not only were Sweet Briar's educational foundations being made more secure during the 1930's but student morale was being maintained at a high level. This period could not by any means be described solely as "depression years." Many students were well aware that family finances were seriously depleted, but the atmosphere at the college was actually lively and optimistic. The large classes entering in 1930 and 1931 were inspiring and the fact that no one had much spending money acted, as shared deprivation often does, as a tie that binds. There were few trips away from campus and a jaunt to Lynchburg was something to save for and look forward to. Bus fare was a half-dollar each way and the chief entertainment in town was a movie or window-shopping, sometimes dinner, but rarely at The Virginian, the hotel where a Sweet Briar

chaperone was still present on Saturday evenings; few could afford to eat there.

As they had been for years, visits from young men were confined almost exclusively to weekends and the preponderance of girls was so great at Saturday night dances in the commons that the girls did the cutting. This phenomenon dismayed boys on their first trip to Sweet Briar but they rapidly adapted to it. Getting into the campus on Sunday was still a challenge to any young man; his name had to be properly registered by the young lady he was calling on by Saturday afternoon, and if it were not on the list of the watchman at the closed gate when he arrived on Sunday he was not admitted, even if he were the girl's brother—which he seldom was.

On campus those who liked sports were never at a loss. The traditional Thanksgiving drag hunt and the May Day horse show included participants from outside the college and both were exciting occasions. There were all kinds of team sports and intercollegiate hockey or basketball games. There were some twenty hockey teams on campus and the best was inevitably The Campus Characters, composed exclusively of non-students. Miss Crawford in leg-guards and a purple skirt was a formidable goalie; Miss Rogers could play rings around any of her prodigies; and the Edwards boys, the physics professor's young sons, bare-foot among clashing sticks, always emerged unscathed—usually with the ball.

Walking continued to be the common denominator of year-round exercise and the pedestrian had many choices. There were pleasant trails to the lake, the dairy, the gate, and Monument Hill where Fletchers and Williamses lay buried. On the other side of the Southern tracks there was a breathtaking view of the Blue Ridge from the crest of the hill at Romeo's store, whence one could walk on to pay a visit to the Barretts. In another direction lay High Peak or Tobacco Row, still as rugged a jaunt as when Elijah and Parson Crawford had trudged over from New Glasgow so many years ago.

On Thanksgiving morning a truck took climbers to the



base of High Peak and returned in the afternoon to pick up an inert heap of humanity which gratefully hailed its arrival. And in spring, there was an excursion to the Peaks of Otter in Bedford County. After a long drive to the Hotel Mons, a huge dinner, a few hours' sleep in a frigid room, the assault on the summit commenced in thick darkness with hopes of reaching the peak before sunrise.

Almost the only planned entertainment came from the regularly scheduled programs of the faculty committee on lectures and concerts. Miss Weaver was for many years chairman of this group which brought excellent speakers and artists. Many students had in 1932 their first astonished glimpse of modern dance when Martha Graham appeared on Sweet Briar's small stage. And there was a memorable evening with Mrs. Patrick Campbell—an old woman, lame and half-blind, who became young and enchanting as her resonant voice began to fill the auditorium. Myra Hess gave several unforgettable concerts and students received from Norman Thomas's own lips their first differentiation of socialism from other "isms." Gertrude Stein came to explain herself; many were enlightened—so long as she kept talking, but later found themselves hard pressed to recapitulate the argument.

An outstanding annual musical event was a concert of the *sinfonietta* from the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Arthur Fiedler. Later this was succeeded by annual visits from the National Symphony Orchestra for which the gymnasium was turned into a concert hall and neighbors from far and wide came to share the occasion. Many a student's musical taste has been permanently influenced by the high calibre of artists and their carefully selected programs.

Student productions were also often noteworthy. One, directed by Cameron King, was an incredibly impressive presentation of Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra*. The glee club and choir trained by Alfred Finch consistently gave superior performances.

Not only were the students busy and, in general, happy, but the faculty was in a ferment over teaching methods

and curriculum. There were committees of self-examination and groups for discussion, all of which resulted in several innovations which enhanced the academic life of the campus. Survey committees reported their findings in 1931, and in 1935 a faculty advisory committee on ten-year suggestions revealed that every department had been scrutinized for its present operations and future needs, the financial and physical limitations of the college had been clearly defined, and a course for the future thoughtfully plotted.

The results of these considerations were far-reaching, some of them accomplished while the self-examination was in progress. The group plan of requirements for graduation was introduced to members of the class which graduated in 1936; they were permitted in their freshman and sophomore years to choose a more or less equal number of hours from four groups of studies—languages, social studies, natural and mathematical sciences, and fine arts—and in their junior and senior years they selected a major study in one department. Or, another innovation, they could choose an interdepartmental major.

In 1929 an interdepartmental major in American Problems was tried experimentally. During the next eight years nine others were added—with such engaging titles as *Revolution and Romanticism*, *The Quadrivium*, *Classical Civilization*—in an endeavor to correlate and make more meaningful studies done in different fields. "Synthesis" was a word often heard around campus. To promote further synthesis the opportunity to read for honors in an Americanized version of the British method was offered to certain qualifying students. Tutorial conferences were substituted for regular classes, but occasionally an honors student drifted back to class and was welcomed as an auditor. Once accustomed to the new scheme those students who elected the honors plan of study enjoyed it and found the experience valuable to them if they went into graduate school.

Furthering the wish to keep students from thinking of their work in terms of isolated courses, comprehensive



examinations were required by a few departments in 1941 and by all in 1952. As seniors reviewed the last two years of their college work they were compelled to correlate knowledge from different courses and break through the artificial boundaries traditionally separating various courses.

An important revision in the curriculum was introduced in 1942 with the formation of the Division of Social Studies after two years of faculty deliberation. It was designed to strengthen offerings in the social studies and, through more flexible teaching arrangements, to provide major programs in each of the departments—economics, government, history and sociology—as well as divisional majors. Miss Gladys Boone, professor of economics, had served as co-ordinator of the planning group and was appointed first chairman of the new Division.

A new course for freshmen, Social Studies 1-2, Introduction to Modern History, was worked out by the staff to serve as a basic course for the Division. It stresses ideas and materials which have relevance for the whole field of social studies and for present-day problems. Freshmen read selections from such authors as Machiavelli, Malthus, Darwin, John Stuart Mill, and many others. They also attend an annual series of supplementary lectures given by experts, some from the Sweet Briar faculty, which serve to relate the social studies to other fields.

The relationship between the subjects included in the Division is further emphasized by the fact that instructors for the basic course are drawn from several departments. Since some staff members teach in more than one field, a variety of interests and experience can be shared in discussion of subject matter and teaching methods in staff meetings.

Another important innovation was study in Europe during the junior year. In 1930 the first Sweet Briar girl joined the Delaware Group in France and in the next few years there were girls not only in France but in Germany under the auspices of the University of Delaware. Miss Glass had also long entertained the notion that Sweet

Briar and Great Britain had an affinity for each other—and if they did not, they should. In 1932 she arranged for three girls to go for the first time to St. Andrews University in Scotland and since that time there have continued the happiest relations between the two institutions. Although this program was interrupted for several years during World War II, it became a two-way venture in 1950, and since then there has been a St. Andrews girl at Sweet Briar every year.

Besides these mutations and evolutions in the college course itself, the rigidity of entrance requirements had been dissolving. Miss Benedict had not been able to allow entering students any exception to the requirement in Latin but in 1917 Miss McVea and the faculty made the exception possible by offering the bachelor of science degree. (Still later, when Sweet Briar gave up the B.S. degree in 1938, even those untutored in Latin could receive a bachelor of arts degree.)

A tremendous step was taken in a direction away from the fifteen prescribed units for entrance which had governed so many young lives, when Sweet Briar in 1937 joined "one hundred colleges cooperating in an experiment of admitting students from the so-called Progressive Schools without requiring their specific units to agree with our usual units." And by 1941 such an extremely broad policy had been accepted that the catalogue listed only *recommended* pre-college courses rather than required ones. That is not to say that these recommendations were not strong nor, on the other hand, that the offerings of applicants whose preparatory work deviated widely from them were not seriously evaluated.

Mrs. Bernice Drake Lill who came to Sweet Briar in 1928 as registrar and became in 1947 the first director of admission, has exercised appreciable influence on Sweet Briar's policy of entrance requirements. Mrs. Lill, a Wellesley graduate who had been in the admission office there and elsewhere, has always kept Sweet Briar in close touch with developments in the increasingly important field of



admissions. Her office uses a cumulative record on each applicant which includes grades in secondary schools, scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test and three achievement tests administered by the College Entrance Examination Board, principals' recommendations, and a letter which the applicant writes herself.

It is the faculty committee on admission, however, which makes final disposition of applications. When Mrs. Lill, who is chairman of the committee, was asked which of the above criteria was most important, her reply was, "Ask each member of the committee!" The devoted membership of this committee—the adjective is well chosen for this is one of the most time-consuming extracurricular tasks of the faculty—is fairly stable and its standards are well established. Some who have served long terms on this committee are Mrs. Wailes (Bertha Pfister, '17), Miss Elisabeth Möller, and Miss Ethel Ramage; Miss Ames served on it for twenty years and Miss Long for thirty years.

Besides sifting applications the admission officer also initiates visits to secondary schools. Such visiting was first done sporadically by the president or members of board or faculty. But in 1932 when applications diminished markedly Mrs. Lill and Miss Glass made a round of visits to preparatory schools and thus began a systematic effort to keep in touch with such institutions. At the suggestion of Susan Jelley, '28 (Mrs. Charles E. Dunbar) Mrs. Lill later organized and trained a large number of alumnae representatives to carry on this activity in their own regions.

There were important additions to the staff and some new administrative innovations in the early thirties. After the one semester when there was a professional publicity agent during the campaign of 1928, a faculty committee under Dr. Connor, head of the English department, guided this activity until 1932 when Margaret Banister became the first director of public relations. Miss Banister had been president of student government in her undergradu-

ate days and had had wide experience with the alumnae association, culminating in its presidency from 1926 to 1930. She had studied at Columbia and had editorial experience in Washington for about six years. She established the office which since 1942 has been run by Martha von Briesen, '31. Press releases are prepared in this office and the director edits the college publications, frequently advises student editors, and answers a profusion of questions on a multitude of subjects. Miss von Briesen is also a photographer of parts whose pictures have supplemented many of her stories.

Another alumna who has contributed most visibly to Sweet Briar is Elsetta Gilchrist, '27 (Mrs. Richard E. Barnes). Her thesis in the Cambridge School of Landscape Architecture was a plan for the landscaping and planting of Sweet Briar, and she has generously taken time from her professional demands in Cleveland to visit Sweet Briar periodically to oversee the execution of that plan. Her first visits were especially timely for the old library had left an ugly scar at its former site and the "new" music building needed good planting to make it appear happily wed to its surroundings. Mrs. Barnes's ministrations have extended far beyond those, however. She maintains at the college a small nursery of trees and shrubs so that well-grown plants may be used; she advises faculty members on the planting around their homes, taking into consideration the campus as a whole. Miss Glass has evaluated her contribution to Sweet Briar in these words: "She has in addition to her special training intimate knowledge of the campus, the outlying Sweet Briar property and in fact most of Amherst County, as well as how this group lives. All of this has given us what no architect summoned periodically to our problems as one of many jobs could do."

In 1935 another gift served to spotlight the natural beauties and interest of the campus when Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Carry, parents of an alumna, Peggy Carry '35 (Mrs. Lewis Hudson Durland), established the Carry Nature Sanctuary. This has, among other things, caused the bird population to become notably more numerous and diverse.



At about the same time Sweet Briar was invited by the New York Southern Society to be one of several colleges conferring its Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award. This award, given in recognition of high qualities of character and spirit, was for many years presented at commencement to a senior and on Founders' Day to a non-student associated with the college.

Fortunately for Sweet Briar, 1932 marked the nadir of her fortunes during the depression years. After the one deficit, operating expenses began to show a small surplus again, and in 1937 the treasurer's report made a most satisfying change from red to black; the whole of the debt existing in 1925 had been retired and the endowment was well over \$400,000.

One of the first things that Miss Glass wanted to do with this upturn in finances was to forward one of the two schemes she had in mind for faculty: sabbatical leaves and a retirement plan. In 1928 she had asked the faculty to express their preference as to which to instigate first. "They were all so young that only three voted for a retirement plan," she said. So a modest offering in sabbatical leaves was arranged for full professors. In 1937 she was eager to extend the privilege to younger faculty in lower ranks who could well use leaves for completing graduate work and augmenting their studies. This was arranged. And in 1939 she pressed for an insurance and annuity plan which was set up to compensate retired professors.

This incipient feeling of opulence was not allowed to expand, however. The fact that endowment was still not abundant was pointedly brought home in 1937. The Council of Phi Beta Kappa had made a searching examination of Sweet Briar's attributes and at last concluded that the college could not at that time be invited to install a chapter of the society because of limited endowment. The arduous labors which Miss Glass and Miss Dutton and other college officers had expended in collecting data for Phi Beta Kappa were signally rewarded later when Sweet Briar was granted a chapter during the following administration—but even in 1937 it was gratifying to read in the re-

port of the examining committee: "The general atmosphere of the college is good; the student and faculty attitude toward scholarship is excellent. The library is adequate to the needs of the College, the staff is efficient and interested. There are especially good collections in English and American literature, French, the classics, botany, psychology, and philosophy. The faculty is well prepared and the teaching load is not excessive."

Miss Benedict, Mr. Reid, and Dr. Grammer, the only survivors of the planning group of those days when the college was a collection of uninhabited buildings on a red clay hill, might well have been buoyed by these words which stoutly confirmed the success of their early fight for quality. But in 1937 as in 1906 the bulwark of financial stability was still needed.

Attempts to raise endowment had faced several obstacles. From the first, the college had suffered from two prejudices: among residents of the region there was a feeling that expenditures in building the college had been injudicious; gifts to Sweet Briar, some thought, would have been a matter of throwing good money after bad. This notion lingered, although from the day college first opened in 1906 there was nothing to give it foundation. Memory is long and conversation easy; the two have perpetuated and even spread vague impressions.

On the other hand, some who knew Sweet Briar from reputation or from a casual visit were often inclined to think of it as a wealthy college for wealthy students, with no obviously pressing need. Dr. McBryde had succeeded admirably in building a college with great style and the Virginia countryside had added to it extraordinary beauty. Stately columns atop green hills, fox hunts, an old plantation home in a superb box garden—these made a picture which gave not the least hint of want.

Another handicap to campaigns for endowment was the very small size of the alumnae group. During the campaign of 1920 there were but 461 college alumnae. More than 900 other alumnae had been special students or in the Academy; while some of these have been among the



most loyal and helpful members of the alumnae association, the greater percentage of them have not maintained close ties with the college.

To be sure Sweet Briar was not utterly bereft of benefactors. The college had received handsome gifts and in January 1940 there was another, which happily combined the honoring of an eminent Virginian with an enhancement of the faculty. The endowment of a Carter Glass Chair of Government was the occasion for concentrating interest and approval on the college from many parts of the country. Senator Glass, who had been a member of Sweet Briar's board of overseers for many years, was also a half-brother of the college's president. In commending this provision for a professor who was "to set forth without passion or prejudice theories and practices of government" the *New York Times* stated in an editorial that "the intellectual honesty and the moral courage of Carter Glass have made his whole career a course in intelligent and honorable politics. . . ."

The man who originated the plan for this professorship and who worked for two years to make it a reality was Mr. Dabney S. Lancaster. Mr. Lancaster came to Sweet Briar in 1937 to fill the newly created position of executive secretary to the board of overseers. By 1927 the responsibilities of the board of directors had become so extensive that it created a larger body, a board of overseers not to exceed fifteen members, to include itself and to have the same powers with the exception of voting "upon matters requiring the corporate action of the Board of Directors." This meant that after a meeting of the board of overseers, the directors in a short session cast the votes which would make legal the actions recommended by the overseers. For this enlarged body, involved with a multiplicity of investigatory and supervisory duties, a full-time executive secretary was indicated. Mr. Lancaster, who had held various educational posts in Virginia, was dean of men at the University of Alabama when he was chosen for the new office, and during his incumbency at Sweet Briar he had the unique experience of serving as president of an organi-

zation to which he still belonged, the National Association of Deans of Men.

Another man who came onto the board of overseers in this period was one already well known at Sweet Briar. He was Mr. Rowland Lea, whose history curiously paralleled that of the Walker family in that he was born in England and as a boy moved to Manitoba with his parents and seven brothers and sisters. Mr. Lea read law, studied geology and roamed all over the western United States until in 1913 he came to Virginia. He and his wife bought a farm, Speed-the-Plough, at the foot of High Peak and grew apples and peaches which are known far and wide. In 1940 Mr. Lea was elected to the board of overseers and two years later to the board of directors. As chairman of the farm committee his counsel has been invaluable, and his quiet courtly manner and twinkling blue eyes make him a welcome addition to any group.

It was, however, the executive secretary, Mr. Lancaster, who was most intimately concerned with Sweet Briar's endowment. He was key man in the undertaking started in 1941 when the president, the board, and the alumnae determined to double existing endowment within five years, to bring it to an even million dollars. Miss Glass made an exploratory trip as far as the west coast to see where the campaign might best be started.

By November 1941 \$117,000 had been added to the fund. But Mr. Lancaster had been called away by the governor of Virginia to become Superintendent of Public Instruction. And the next month the nation was at war.

Like the rest of the country Sweet Briar was much more deeply involved in this war than in the last one. Miss Glass had to turn from campaigning for endowment to duties on the National Committee on Education and Defense. On campus a Committee on Emergency Service did everything from sponsoring discussion groups on world conditions to packing Bundles for Britain. Mrs. Joseph Barker's unceasing efforts for the Free French swung many into active participation in its program.



There were other invigorating effects of wartime. Enrollment was at capacity and many courses were attended with renewed interest. At the instigation of Miss Sparrow, abetted by Miss Crawford, a new course was offered called "Studies in the Present Crisis." Visiting lecturers brought highlights of the world situation to campus: Clarence Streit, Count Sforza, André Maurois, Sir Norman Angell, Ernest Lindley and others.

And of course there was trouble getting sufficient domestic help. Miss Glass tells how she met the situation when the waitresses, most of whom were not students, departed for war-time jobs: "When it became necessary to request aid from the students I told them of a meeting I had attended in Washington where college officials were discussing what could be done as service personnel left the campuses. There was a good deal of dismay expressed and the chairman turned to me and asked, 'Miss Glass, have you any suggestion to make?' and my reply was that Sweet Briar was a woman's college, and that if we had food and could not get it on the table I hoped we would starve. I then asked the students if they wished to discuss the matter and they said no. I asked for any questions, and again, no questions. Someone said, 'They will tell us when and what to do'—and the matter was thus settled." Each student gave two weeks' service a year in the dining room without pay, and those who still wished to earn a part of their expenses in that way formed a continuing nucleus who held the waitress corps together.

One major Sweet Briar undertaking, totally unrelated to world conflict, was initiated at this time. A remarkable testimony of devotion and interest from former students and faculty was manifested in the establishment of the Mary Kendrick Benedict Scholarship. Started in June 1944, by April 1945 the fund totaled \$8,172 given by 168 persons—each of whom Miss Benedict had characteristically thanked with a personal note. Half a year later the goal of \$12,000 had been reached. It was a gala occasion when the scholarship was presented to Miss Glass by the chair-

man, Marion Peele, on Founders' Day in October. Miss Benedict, Dr. Guion, Miss Sparrow, Dr. Rollins, Miss Morenus, Dr. Harley, Miss McLaws, Miss Mattie and Miss Gay Patteson and a host of other faculty and alumnae pioneers were reunited on that happy day.

In spite of the rewarding turn taken by some developments of war years life on campus was naturally not all sunshine. There is no measure of the toll taken here as elsewhere in anxiety and loneliness or in the restlessness of those who found academic life unsatisfying when employment more pointedly applicable to winning a war seemed clearly indicated. That generation of students had also to forego many of the social pleasures usually counted as an important part of college life. As in the early days of Sweet Briar when mud deterred visitors, so did scarcity of gasoline and appointments elsewhere prevent many travelers from reaching campus between 1942 and 1945. When a young soldier on leave could manage to reach a friend at Sweet Briar, he would often stay a week, attending all her classes with her.

On the material side, there was the depreciation in buildings and grounds with which all home-owners grew familiar, and the Inn suffered considerable financial loss. Also the registrar's office temporarily lost its chief when Mrs. Lill went into the WAVES. Miss Jeanette Boone ("Dan" Boone, '27) who had been assistant registrar stepped into the breach and for nearly two years was ably assisted by another alumna, Edna Lee, '26 (Mrs. Joseph W. Cox) who has turned her heart and hand eagerly and effectively to every kind of service for Sweet Briar. One of the young alumnae who toured the country in the 1928 campaign for funds, she was later president of the alumnae association for four years, and she has been a member of the board of overseers. In the current development program she has again taken an active part, as chairman of the auditorium-planning committee and as a gracious and persuasive speaker for Sweet Briar in many cities.

Several years after the death of her husband, Colonel Cox, in World War II, she married Joseph A. Gilchrist



jr., manager of the Sweet Briar farm and a brother of Elsetta Gilchrist Barnes. The Gilchrists' home in the remodeled farmhouse continues to be the hospitable spot which it was in the days long ago when the Martindales lived there, and later the Blackwells.

An important change in personnel of the administration had occurred in 1940 with the retirement of Dean Dutton. Mrs. Mary Ely Lyman was chosen as her successor and during the trials of the war years was a tower of strength to Miss Glass.

Mrs. Lyman had had a distinguished career as a professor of Biblical literature at Vassar and, in New York City, as lecturer in English Bible at Union Theological Seminary and Barnard College. Her husband, Dr. Eugene William Lyman, had just retired as professor of philosophy of religion at Union Seminary, and his presence was an addition to the campus during the eight remaining years of his life.

Mrs. Lyman's description of life in the dean's office at Sweet Briar is amusing and revealing: "Miss Glass used to refer to the Dean's Office as 'the universal joint.' I always hesitated a bit at the connotations of that word 'joint' but in the sense in which she meant it, there was real applicability to the work that went on in our office. It is exhilarating to work at the center of things, and if sometimes we felt harried by the requests to solve every kind of problem from the tidiness of students' clothing to plumbing in the dormitory 'because you, as Dean, could speak about it' when nobody else wanted to, still we worked along feeling that we had a chance at things, and it was fun."

Mrs. Lyman strengthened the faculty advisory system and extended the duties of faculty residents in the dormitories in order to bring her office into closer relation with the students. And besides lending the weight of her own strong character and good judgment to the many decisions which the dean was called upon to make, Mrs. Lyman was a forceful speaker and an effective leader. When the time came for Miss Glass to retire, Sweet Briar was fortunate

in having Mrs. Lyman as second-in-command, a liaison between administrations.

In 1946, with war ended and the endowment hovering at a million dollars, Miss Glass did retire—with many reasons for satisfaction in her twenty-one years at Sweet Briar. She said at the time, "I never had any doubts about what I wanted to do, and I have had no regrets about my profession. Educational administration has been interesting, and I consider teaching one of the most fascinating, exhilarating, and refreshing professions one could have."

As Miss Glass's retirement drew near, the faculty and staff gave a dinner in her honor at which representatives of different groups had opportunity to voice their appreciation of Miss Glass herself as well as her achievements for the college. Dr. Connor, as master of ceremonies, read a particularly memorable tribute to the various qualities of greatness that Miss Glass had brought to the service of Sweet Briar.

Recalling the occasion, a member of the faculty who worked under Miss Glass during most of her presidency has recently written: "We all rejoiced when Carl made her courage a central feature in his tribute. I've never known her to dodge an issue. Her reactions were quick and to the point, no matter what was involved. This directness of speech and action left none of us ever in doubt as to her stand on any problem. She relished a good debate, though, if some member of the faculty had equal courage of conviction on the other side.

"Miss Glass was always faultlessly groomed," the reminiscences continue, "and she encouraged others to look their best through quick remarks of approval when they succeeded. Even the campus paths looked tidier after the president had passed along and instinctively stooped to pick up any stray scrap of paper.

"Miss Glass and Sweet Briar House seemed made for each other—and both together seemed made to give warm welcome. Almost every Sunday Miss Glass had a group of faculty as her guests for dinner with the visiting minister. Her own mind had a native bent for theology, and



she often probed deep in areas opened up by the sermon. Throughout her administration she was chairman of the Church and Chapel Committee and for several meetings each year she gathered its thirty-odd members around a cheerful fire in the big parlor of Sweet Briar House.

"Her interest and constant participation enriched the worship services of the college in many ways. She almost never missed presiding at the Sunday service, and she led one of the weekday chapels at least every month. Early in her administration she initiated the daily Lenten services that have now become such a meaningful Sweet Briar tradition, and when some students requested a place on campus for quiet prayer and meditation Miss Glass caught fire at once and spared no pains in helping to convert the Slave Cabin into a beautiful little oratory.

"Miss Glass possesses a personal force and magnetism that make the place where she stands always seem the center of the room. And she has such innate dignity that it never needs any superficial safeguards. She could exult in public or private over a joke on herself, or could star in a superbly ridiculous act in a faculty show, without detracting one whit from her dignity as the First Lady. These gifts were unforgettably brought to a focus in her role of Queen Elizabeth on the occasion of the great Elizabethan festival one May Day."

In 1929 Miss Glass had been elected to the board of overseers of Sweet Briar. As she left the presidency she wished also to withdraw from the board, but her resignation was refused. She compromised by absenting herself from meetings for a year and has since been a regular member. One of the measures she initiated is to make the president of the college an *ex officio* member of the board, a move which her predecessor, Miss Benedict, may well have appreciated as she recalled the days when she attended board meetings by invitation—and then only for a part of the session.

Even in Miss Benedict's day, however, the men had a true respect for the president and she in turn had the

deepest esteem for them. One of the most gratifying aspects of the Sweet Briar administration has been the understanding relation between president and board. Miss Glass was once attending a meeting of presidents of women's colleges when discussion turned on relations between president and board. "I hadn't said anything," Miss Glass recounted, "and the talk went on. I was called on and I said, 'I can't contribute anything here. I call most of my board by their first names and I kiss some of them.'"

During Miss Glass's first years as president she had relied heavily on the counsel and encouragement of Mr. Cumnock. "He was a perfect mainstay to me," she said. "He had a fabric mill down in Altavista but every week he used to drive over here, forty miles, to check on the building of the stucco faculty houses. Miss McVea had been sick for three years and Mr. Cumnock felt more responsible than ever.

"When he became ill we'd all get into my car and go down and have executive committee meetings at his house. But when he could come to Sweet Briar he'd go down to see the furnace—he'd go to see anything!"

It is still true that members of the board will "go to see anything." Mr. Gerhard Suhling has walked over acres of possible sites for faculty houses; Mr. Tom Wailes goes down to the lake to scrutinize the leaking dam; Mr. Adrian Massie takes off his coat and climbs into dormitory attics to inspect roofing; Mr. Raine Pettyjohn knows all of the buildings down to the last brick. Mr. Archibald Robertson, who in 1955 was succeeded by Mr. Lancaster as president of the board, is called on for counsel in a thousand connections.

It is impossible to do more than hint at the countless ways in which board members give generously of their time, their ability, and the fruits of their long experience. This gift is especially striking when one considers that often their tie to Sweet Briar at the beginning of their board membership is rather tenuous. But nearly every member of the board has become engrossed in the challenge that arises today in operating a college—in particular



Sweet Briar College—and has given himself wholeheartedly to the study and solution of its problems.

Alumnae representation on the board of overseers was instituted in 1934. At that time the alumnae association was invited to nominate two of its members for election by the board, their terms to run for six years, the same as the non-alumnae members. In 1952, largely through Mrs. Pannell's encouragement, the board invited further representation and the number of alumnae members was increased to four. In order to make it possible for more alumnae to become conversant with the management of the institution and thereby to increase the understanding and concern of the whole body of alumnae for the ongoing affairs of the college, the alumnae council recommended a shorter term of four years for the alumnae members. The alumnae association adopted this recommendation and the four alumnae members of the board of overseers are now elected to serve for four years, one term expiring each year, with no privilege of re-election. In 1954 the board of overseers invited the president of the alumnae association to serve in an *ex officio* capacity. The thirteen alumnae who have served on the board up to the present have played an increasingly important role in the reciprocal interpretations of the actions of overseers and alumnae association and they have offered personal proof that Sweet Briar has educated the kind of woman whom in its beginning it proposed to develop.

One reason for Miss Glass's desire to leave the board in 1946 was that she felt she had earned a life with no committee meetings. She retired to Charlottesville, and for a while meetings were rigorously excluded. But Miss Glass's abilities are too well known to lie unused. Hardly was she "retired" when she was traveling throughout the country hearing appeals to the Loyalty Review Board to which President Truman had appointed her.

And she was very busy again when Nan Powell Hodges at Stuart Hall broke her hip and asked for emergency assistance. In her seventy-fourth year Miss Glass not only

took over the administration of Stuart Hall but she lived on the same schedule as the fourteen-year-olds. She admits only one concession to her seniority: "I did have breakfast by myself."

Another call made upon her was to fly to the Mediterranean as a Visitor to the American College for Girls in Istanbul. "Nine weeks of delightful experiences," she characterized it.

In Charlottesville she is well known as an active Democrat and an actress of parts who did a show-stopping number in the production by the Rotunda Players of "Green Grow the Lilacs." A remark of hers as she was leaving church one morning that the church surely needed cleaning and she thought it could be done for about seventy-five dollars brought another job to keep her from sitting idle in her house on the hill at Farmington.

Because of post-war building costs the house is not a complete translation of her pre-war dreams. She says of it, "I never lived cozy and I'm not going to die cozy. I'd rather have fewer rooms and larger ones." So Miss Glass's kitchen is no nook; her bedrooms easily accommodate canopied beds; her living-room gives to one who likes to take a large view of things ample opportunity to do so. And the Latin stylist with imagination and a sense of fitness has given the house an epithet which it is not amiss to apply also to its owner: "Ipsissima."



## CHAPTER VII

# *Post-War Transitions*

1946-1950

MOST OF SWEET BRIAR helped to choose the fourth president. When Miss Glass indicated in 1944 that she planned to retire in two years the board, faculty, and alumnae formed committees to seek her successor. After a diligent search, many interviews, and much discussion, the board announced the selection of Martha B. Lucas; her inauguration took place on November 1, 1946.

Miss Lucas was associate dean of Radcliffe College. She had gone there from Westhampton College of the University of Richmond where she had been dean of students. She also taught philosophy and religion, subjects of dominating interest to her. A goodly portion of her associates were apt to find them interesting subjects too, for Miss Lucas was young, animated, and—thanks perhaps to her Irish grandfather—articulate. Values which were vital to her had a way of becoming vital to those about her.

Martha Lucas was born and reared in Louisville, Kentucky. With no brothers and sisters, she profited from a great deal of time and talk with her father, Robert Hendry Lucas, a lawyer who was active in politics. In 1928 he was Commissioner of Internal Revenue under President Hoover, and in 1936 he was the defeated Republican nominee for United States senator from Kentucky.

This intimate tie with one whose convictions on government were grounds for action rather than mere debate was an important influence in Miss Lucas's life. Academic studies for her were never topics of contemplation only. At the George Washington University she wrote a master's thesis on *Kant's Theories of Space*; at the University of London her doctoral dissertation concerned *Samuel Clarke and His Contemporaries*. Both of these she viewed not as

## POST-WAR TRANSITIONS

esoteric examples of scholarship but as "helpful eighteenth century background for teaching college students about twentieth century philosophy and religion." And her conception of twentieth century philosophy and religion led her directly into the life strenuous, a life which also kept those about her from a languid existence, either physically or intellectually. As one of her Sweet Briar colleagues said, "She was a Socratic gadfly."

After receiving the A.B. degree from Goucher College in 1933 Miss Lucas spent four years in Europe as a graduate student. This experience struck deep into her the truth that men of all nations share a common humanity which overshadows the differences between them. The corollary of this truth was of prime importance: "As all of us studied and thought together," she says, "no one of us failed to find common ground and a community of interest which would have rendered forever impossible our voluntarily resorting to force against each other."

She became determined to bend her energies towards world peace. When the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was formed, the opening lines of the preamble to its constitution were especially meaningful to Miss Lucas: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed." Miss Lucas dedicated herself to build those defenses in the minds of students.

The foundation for these defenses, it appeared to her, was democracy, the form of government in which the voice of all men may be heard. This meant that they must have something to speak about and the ability to speak it; a liberal arts college should develop both. The leaders and faculty of Sweet Briar College had, of course always believed this; the ideal of democracy was no stranger to the campus, but as president of Sweet Briar Miss Lucas sought means of intensifying training in the uses of democracy.

For one thing, she encouraged a new consideration of the form of student government, and a revised constitu-



tion was voted which divided the executive and judicial functions of the organization. This offered opportunities for more girls to participate in student administration, and, secondarily, served the welcome purpose of reducing somewhat the time required for student government officers to acquit their duties.

The self-interrogation which had been intensive among the faculty in the early thirties sprang up now among the students. Encouraged to express themselves, they promoted meetings on campus to assess various facets of the educational process to which they were being exposed. Tau Phi sponsored such gatherings at which there were frank statements on the value of certain courses, or weaknesses and strengths of the faculty advisory system. Since class attendance had been made the responsibility of the students by successive steps between 1937 and the spring of 1946, it was the motivation of steady attendance which now became a challenging subject in student-faculty discussions.

There were also meetings of the town hall type where topics for consideration ranged from means of entertaining young men on campus to problems of college financing. Perhaps it was one of these which enabled a student to surprise a visiting reporter from the *New York Herald-Tribune* by meeting his query, "What do you think is the greatest need of the college?" with the reply, "An increase in faculty salaries."

The realization of that selfsame need was borne home to another group, namely alumnae. During the war, alumnae clubs had become almost totally inactive; to focus their attention once again the alumnae council, at a suggestion from Miss Mary Benedict, organized material for them to use in a year-long study of the quality of college preparatory work offered in their own communities. Considerable thought and activity in various clubs went into questions to local school boards, inquiry into the secondary school curriculum, and subsequently, into Sweet Briar's entrance requirements and curriculum of that time.

As to all who ponder deeply the problems of education, to the alumnae came a sharpened awareness that even more basic than the question of curriculum is the question of personnel, the quality of the teachers themselves. In recognition of the primary need—to attract and hold a truly able faculty—the alumnae association for several successive years after its study earmarked its entire annual fund to be applied to faculty salaries.

Another result of the study was that it gave fresh impetus to the group of alumnae representatives on admission who visited preparatory schools and talked with prospective students.

Another group of persons with a vital interest in Sweet Briar was also for the first time drawn into more direct relation with the college through Miss Lucas's efforts; these were parents of students. In 1947 a Parents' Day was designated at the college and seventy-seven of them came for an informal day—partly social; partly informative with talks from president, dean, and treasurer; partly to enjoy a concert by the Glee Club and Miss Iren Marik, the talented pianist from Budapest, recently become a member of the music department.

The enthusiasm which greeted this first gathering led to the continuation of Parents' Day as an annual occasion, and in two years attendance was far more than doubled.

It was Miss Lucas who had the happy thought of honoring those men and women who had worked for the college for twenty-five years or more, on the farm, in the refectories, in the laundry, and elsewhere. On a fine sunny afternoon early in June 1950, Sweet Briar gathered for a special ceremony under the elms in the quadrangle. Those to be cited—Betty Lyon, Mrs. Watts, Ellis Lamb, Bowman Knuckles, Aurelia and Sterling Jones, Chris Thompson, John Reid, Lewis Chambers, and many others—were all there looking trim, handsome, and self-conscious. Miss Dee Long, with grace, sprightliness and loving kindness that put all at their ease, spoke in turn to the twenty-nine honored guests, telling from her own memory and experience some humorous and endearing anecdote about each one. Then



Miss Lucas presented the gifts from the college—a citation of appreciation and a silver bowl or tray.

This pleasant episode set a pattern and at a similar ceremony five years later not only could recognition be given for a quarter-century of service but gold lapel pins were also presented to Sterling Jones and Lewis Chambers who had passed fifty years at the college. As Sterling Jones commented, "I helped to make the bricks for Academic and stayed to see the college come up to its natural pitch."

No one took more delight in these and other backward looks into Sweet Briar's past than Miss Long. She had come as an English instructor in 1919 and confessed that she accepted an invitation that year to chaperone students to a dance in Lexington "because I thought I would probably never have another opportunity to see Lexington. I didn't like Sweet Briar and I wasn't going to stay longer than a year."

To all who knew her later this is a shocking statement! Never has anyone been enmeshed more deeply in all the lines of Sweet Briar's development. During seventeen years as a dormitory resident Miss Long knew hosts of students intimately. She served on every major faculty committee, wrote skits for the faculty show and was one of its drollest performers. She had friends throughout Amherst County and worked in the establishment of the Amherst County Health Association. And she was utterly engrossed in the history of Sweet Briar. Her eyes lit up when she talked of Elijah and Miss Indie and Daisy, as if she had known them all.

Four years after her retirement in 1950 Miss Long sat down one morning to copy for the Sweet Briar history a letter containing invaluable information on Emilie Watts McVea. That afternoon she was taken hurriedly to the hospital and when she died a few days later she must surely have been content to know that her last useful act had been in behalf of Sweet Briar.

Miss Long, however, was still enjoying her last years as a professor of English when Miss Lucas was urging upon

the college community her conviction that if the defense of peace were to start in a comprehending interplay of men's minds, it was not to stop there. It must continue into the more challenging steps of understanding the minds of men who were bred in a religious and political climate so different from ours that only the closest attention could produce true appreciation of them. In making this possible Miss Lucas saw that not only must students of Sweet Briar become thoroughly acquainted with the values of people from other parts of the world, but that they should hear them from the lips of those people themselves. She would bring to the green hills of Amherst County teachers and students from other lands. This she did. She founded the Nan and Nancy Askew Scholarship for oriental students. This opened an era when saris and oriental pajamas began to mingle with sweaters and skirts in the attire of students, and turbans were seen on the lecture platform.

Believing that "world brotherhood and world peace are religious concepts, basically and historically, [whose] . . . proper setting is in chapel" Miss Lucas marked the anniversary of UNESCO in November 1947 by announcing a series of talks entitled "Meet the World in College Chapel." Speakers from different religious groups gave the college a sympathetic and informed interpretation of their respective religions. And in the spring of 1948 a three-day conference on The Role of Colleges in Promoting Peace through International Understanding was enthusiastically acclaimed by all on campus. Among the speakers were Sir Alfred Zimmern, formerly of Oxford University and the Geneva School of International Studies, Dr. Luther Evans, Librarian of Congress and one of the leaders of UNESCO, and Mr. Laurence Duggan, Director of the Institute of International Education.

Also to help open international doors a number of instructors whose own upbringing and education had been completed in other countries were invited into the faculty. There had always been foreign-born members of the faculty, but chiefly as teachers of their native languages. The new names were connected with history (Masur from Berlin),



government and economics (Hapala of Czechoslovakia), mathematics (Iwanowski from Poland), art (Bernheimer from Germany), and music (Marik of Hungary); there were also several who did teach languages: Kreusler (Russian), Levi D'Ancona (Italian), and Esquenazi (Spanish).

Since 1930 some Sweet Briar students had been able to enjoy the means par excellence for knowing people of other countries through study in Europe with the Delaware Group. In 1948 there came a change which considerably altered student opportunity in this field, and which substantially strengthened the ties between Sweet Briar and the European scene.

Dr. Joseph Barker, professor of French who with his attractive French wife, Jeanne, had made their home a welcome rendezvous on campus, had directed the University of Delaware junior year in France one year in the mid-thirties and had later served on its advisory committee of the Institute of International Education. Late in 1947 he had, quite by chance, received word that the University of Delaware was giving up its sponsorship of the Foreign Study Program and he brought the news to Miss Lucas. Did she think, he asked hopefully, that Sweet Briar might take it over?

Dr. Barker had estimated Miss Lucas correctly; wires were soon buzzing and telegrams flying. The Sweet Briar board of directors approved the project and in a few weeks Miss Lucas and Dr. Barker were meeting with the advisory committee at the Institute of International Education. One of the chief problems to settle was whether or not men students would be included in the group. A curious objection was raised by the all-masculine committee, namely, "the inadvisability of allowing a college with the 'unfortunate' name of 'Sweet Briar' to take over so important a project." They feared that it would "inevitably discourage men students from participating." This objection was overcome, however, and Dr. Barker, who was made director of the Junior Year in France, busied himself from that moment with the thousand details to be settled.

The machinery for running the group had fallen into disuse during the war and the Barkers had to spend a busy summer in Paris rediscovering quarters for students and making the necessary arrangements with the University of Paris. By the fall of 1948 the first group, sixty-seven strong, under the aegis of Sweet Briar arrived in Paris. Men students had not, after all, found the name repellent; the biggest representation from any one college was from Yale, which sent fourteen men. Nine years later, more than 600 students from 104 colleges and universities had been enrolled. The Junior Year in France continues to be one of Sweet Briar's liveliest concerns.

With these influences at work the college had many points of interest far from its campus. It even brought to bear some of its international enthusiasm on the program for Amherst County Day in 1948 when visitors were treated to a showing of films on post-war reconstruction in Europe and Asia.

And for her own part, Miss Lucas was *in medias res* in affairs international. She was appointed in 1948 to attend a conference in Utrecht to prepare for the administration of the now well-known Fulbright Scholarships; of nearly 200 delegates from 36 countries Miss Lucas was the only representative of a woman's college. The next year she was one of five members of the National Selection Committee for Fulbright Scholarships. And in the fall of 1949 she was one of five delegates from the United States to a General Conference of UNESCO in Paris. Her experiences in these organizations were vividly reported to the campus; and nothing but first-hand experience of their own could have been more illuminating and exciting to the students.

In spite of her earnestness in wishing, above all, to focus the eyes of Sweet Briar students on world problems Miss Lucas's intensity was tempered by humor. Dean Lyman said of her that "educational, metaphysical, and religious goals were upheld by her serious purpose, but it was mediated through gaiety" Mrs. Lyman remembers "her quick footfall as she strode down the hall, to knock on my



door and say 'Hi Dean,' starting a conversation that was chockablock with questions that plumbed the depths, not only of educational policy, but of metaphysical ultimates."

Mrs. Lyman was well fitted to be the running mate of Miss Lucas. She too was an internationalist, not only on the basis of her belief in Christian brotherhood but as one who had studied in Cambridge, England, had lectured at the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem, and had traveled widely. She too found religious questions of the greatest significance. And she too had a sense of humor.

The multiplicity of duties of the president herself included, of course, many questions which were far from the international level. One of the requirements of college presidents is that they must be capable of quick fluctuations from the general to the pointedly specific. In Miss Lucas's case, democracy and internationalism sometimes had to wait upon—tedious to relate—questions of the budget. When she took office in 1946 inflation was making itself all too obvious, and one of her first hard duties was maintaining a faculty of high quality on what seemed very low salaries.

The task, not exactly a novel one, was exceptionally difficult at that time. Graduate schools during war years had produced a mere trickle of potential college instructors and in a sharply reduced "market" of teachers not only colleges but government offices were bidding against each other. The government's need for trained personnel at all levels made serious depredations into the field of education. Professors on salaries of \$5,000 were offered twice that to become expert advisers in departments of government; and, more specifically, one Sweet Briar instructor drawing \$2,000 could hardly be blamed for accepting an offer of \$3,400 in naval research. Within the educational world, state universities, whose appropriations could be handsomely increased as tax revenues swelled, were formidable rivals to all private colleges.

One of Miss Lucas's recurring tasks was to accumulate information on the rapidly changing salary scales of women's colleges, to report them to the board, and to point out that Sweet Briar did not compare well with most of them. She suggested raising the tuition fees to meet the situation. The board, reluctant to increase student expenses, pondered deeply, then finally did raise fees—three times in four years; there was nothing else to do. Miss Lucas came in 1946 when fees had just been advanced by \$35 to \$1,135. At its fall meeting that year the board voted another increase from \$1,135 to \$1,250, but by spring when the catalogue was printed that sum was inadequate; a correction was inserted stating that the board had voted again—to make the fees \$1,350 for 1947-1948. And the next year this figure grew to \$1,450. One can readily understand why in one of her reports Miss Lucas wrote, "In this period of human history an optimist is being defined as one who thinks the future is uncertain."

No one enjoyed making these increases, but they served important purposes of keeping operational accounts in the black and of twice providing for substantially higher faculty salaries. In spite of added income, however, there was constant pressure on the administration to make hard choices. Something was always having to be sacrificed; every step forward was made at the expense of something that had to wait, something with urgent claims of its own. Many needed items of plant maintenance had to be postponed again and again. These decisions were especially onerous at a time when the whole world needed so much.

Advances in tuition fees were legislated with particular hesitancy lest they affect the number of applications at this time. There were already two other factors which might reduce applications: first, adoption of the College Entrance Examination Board program which required three achievement tests, in addition to the Scholastic Aptitude Test already being taken by all applicants; second, a low national birthrate during depression years pointed to a diminution of the total number of eighteen-year-olds in the late 1940's. It was a source of great relief, and some



pride, that the decisions to raise fees and to strengthen the admissions procedure resulted in no dearth of applicants.

The students after the war enjoyed an accelerated social life such as Sweet Briar had never seen. Students at neighboring men's colleges included a great many veterans; they were used to wangling transportation and going wherever they wanted to, and many of them were able to buy cars of their own. Sweet Briar began to have a greater number of men visitors, who came not only on weekends as most callers previously had. To accommodate some of these visitors a recreation building, promptly dubbed "The Date House," was erected at the edge of the main campus; it had a snack counter, fireplace, room for dancing and bridge—and later a flagged terrace for warm weather use.

Sweet Briar students themselves began to travel more too. And college chaperones who formerly accompanied the girls to dances in Charlottesville and Lexington had vanished during the war. In 1952 seniors were permitted—a great step—to have their own cars after spring vacation. Even Thanksgiving, which had been a holiday centered on campus, was in Miss Lucas's time thrown into a long weekend characterized by a general exodus; one student even flew home to Texas to have Thanksgiving turkey with her family.

The strongly centralized campus life has not disintegrated and, from the very nature of Sweet Briar, probably never will. But it has surely loosened a bit. Not only have some of the faculty scattered to live away from campus but the role of the president has changed from the days when Miss Benedict was the magnetic core of so many of the college activities, when Miss McVea used to prepare supper parties which she herself served to the faculty in her upstairs sitting room. And Miss Glass often had faculty in for a table of bridge, and students dropped in now and then. But the calls of the post-war world took the president from campus more and more; speaking engagements and demands of committees and alumnae clubs kept and continue to keep the president often on the road—or in the air.

In September 1949 came an announcement which most agreeably stirred everyone interested in Sweet Briar: a charter for the Theta chapter of Phi Beta Kappa had been granted to the college. This was a source of infinite satisfaction to all who had worked and were working for Sweet Briar, and perhaps most of all to those who had set out in 1906 with the hope and determination that their college would be one of unquestioned academic excellence, acknowledged by all scholars.

Miss Lucas was also bringing honor to the college in the responsibilities which she, like her predecessors, added to a schedule already heavy with presidential duties. She was a member of the board of directors of the Association of American Colleges, she was vice-president of the Southern University Conference and vice-chairman of the American Council on Education and she served on the executive committee of the Council on International Educational Projects.

Miss Lucas addressed many audiences and she often had an electric influence when she spoke of her deep concern for "the entire human family," when she passionately defended her faith in the principles of freedom which inspired the birth of our nation, and when she condemned the authoritarians who sought to repress that freedom. She further sought to show that spiritual conviction, a deep religious persuasion, was the basis for the American Declaration of Independence and that such conviction underlies all attempts of man to defend freedom, equality, and justice. When she spoke she lost herself in her subject. She would arrive on the speakers' platform at Sweet Briar "with sleeves rolled up," ready to do battle for a cause.

She strongly felt that a person with honest beliefs should express them without reservation, at whatever cost to himself. And like others in that position, she had found that a college president can never speak without using a measure of reservation; that there is an inevitable identification of a president with his institution, and if a president's words or acts should cost him criticism, the institution must also pay. With her devout wish to let every group



and individual be heard, Miss Lucas found it intolerable to be thus constrained by her own conscience from absolutely free expression and action.

For her this dilemma became so acute that it led at last to an event which struck the entire college family like a thunderbolt. In October 1949 Miss Lucas was in Paris attending a meeting of UNESCO. From there she sent to Sweet Briar's board of directors a carefully prepared statement of her decision to resign at the close of that academic year, the fourth year of her presidency.

When Dean Lyman announced the resignation to the faculty and the students, the college community was stunned by its unexpectedness, disappointed at losing the leadership of such a president, and puzzled as to the reasons underlying Miss Lucas's general statement of the "spiritual 'call'" that required her resignation. Calmer consideration during succeeding weeks convinced many that the basic reason had in fact been made quite clear. As she had said in her letter, "this crucial time in human history demands forthright and unequivocal statements and actions from all." To be true to herself at a time when "the human rights in our American idealism are seriously threatened," Miss Lucas had to become a completely free individual who could devote herself to any means that seemed to her to lead most directly to "the realization of the values that I believe to be paramount," without having to take the longer, slower course that any institution must follow. The board respected Miss Lucas's wishes and with reluctance accepted her resignation.

In a statement to the press following announcement of her resignation, Miss Lucas stated her intention to continue some writing, already in progress, in the field of philosophy of religion.

The approaching end of this short administration put the college into an unforeseen period of transition. Dean Lyman was leaving also in June 1950. She had already accepted appointment as Jesup Professor of English Bible at Union Theological Seminary, the first full professorship

ever offered there to a woman. While Sweet Briar mingled its regret at her departure with pride in this honor shown her, it still was hard hit by the double loss of its chief administrators.

During this year the faculty took the initiative in several steps designed to preserve continuity with the past ideals and achievements of the college. A faculty committee formulated a summary of the liberal ways in which Sweet Briar had implemented its educational aims. The entire faculty reaffirmed their support of these aims. Looking to the future, various faculty members expressed to the board their hope that the new dean might be Miss Mary J. Pearl, who had taught in the department of Greek and Latin since 1928 and had ably served as acting dean in 1948-1949. Miss Pearl's appointment contributed strength and steadiness during the time of adjustment as well as during succeeding years.

Initiative from alumnae as well as faculty resulted this same year in the creation of Joint Council, a unique institution comprising representatives of the board, the faculty, the alumnae, and the students. This council continues to meet twice a year to discuss pressing problems or any topic germane to the functioning of the college as a whole. It serves as a meeting-place for ideas of all generations and branches of the college family and its older members often have the pleasure of seeing an unabashed and constructive contribution from students, whose interest embraces a wide variety of college concerns. All who have been chosen from year to year by their respective groups to represent them on Joint Council have appreciated its value in furthering mutual understanding.

At the end of this year, in June 1950, Miss Lucas was invited by the graduating seniors to be their commencement speaker. Her last presidential address was a forceful summary of her beliefs with an earnest plea to her listeners to exercise their freedom and to oppose always what they believed to be wrong. Then together with those students whose arrival had coincided with her own Miss Lucas went out from Sweet Briar.



## CHAPTER VIII

# *Toward the Future*

1950-1956

ANNE THOMAS GARY was graduated from Barnard College in 1931 and one of her classmates inscribed as a farewell wish in her yearbook, "Good luck to the future president." Other classmates prophesied that she would become editor of "Current Events Magazine" and it was foreseen that in all certitude she would be chief speaker at the twenty-fifth reunion of her class.

As it turned out, Anne Gary did indeed become president—of another college. But she was prevented from speaking at her class reunion in 1956 because it coincided with a celebration of the golden anniversary of Sweet Briar, the college to which she had been devoting herself for the preceding six years. She had foregone an inaugural ceremony when she took office in order that expenditures necessary for it might instead be applied to commemorate the anniversary.

She had early decided to be an historian. When she was a little girl in Virginia she had found it easy to become interested in true stories of "the olden days" associated with so many places in that state. And when the family moved to New York City her father had further expanded her appreciation of her country's past by taking her, his only child, on systematic excursions over the island of Manhattan. He would lay out an area for them to cover each Sunday and by the time she was sixteen Anne had a close and thorough knowledge of the great city. "When my father took me to a museum it was inspected with such application that when I left I felt that I would *never* have to come back to see what was in that museum," she recalls.

As a college undergraduate her interest was aroused in the Quakers and the study of this subject led her to Eng-

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land. There she earned her doctorate from St. Hugh's College at Oxford with a dissertation on *The Political and Economic Relations of English and American Quakers—1750-1785*. During depression years, so unpromising for inexperienced teachers, this degree helped her to win an appointment as instructor in history at the Alabama College for Women.

In Alabama she met a professor of education at the state university named Henry Clifton Pannell, and in 1936 they were married. Young Mrs. Pannell's academic career was interrupted while she took personal charge of a household that soon included two small sons, Gary and Clifton. But her profession was also a vocation, in the literal sense of the word, and in 1939 she returned to teaching. Eight years later she was made chairman of freshman history at the University of Alabama.

Tragedy fell upon the family in 1946 when Mr. Pannell, the newly-elected State Superintendent of Education in Alabama, died very suddenly of a heart attack. Mrs. Pannell continued as a member of the university faculty until Goucher College appointed her as its dean, in 1949, and she moved with her sons to Baltimore.

The following year Sweet Briar invited her to become its fifth president.

The most striking response to Mrs. Pannell's appointment to Sweet Briar was not occasioned by her achievement as scholar and administrator nor by her own personal attractiveness. The immediate object of interest was her family. Imagine Sweet Briar House with—of all things!—little boys in it!

Nearly seventy years had elapsed since a child had lived there, a little girl whose favorite piece of music was "A Maiden's Prayer." Her harp standing in the bay of a drawing-room window looked very proper and girlish and nineteenth century-ish when the boys' phonograph began to animate a summer's day with "Muskrat Ramble" as they accompanied it on drum and trumpet. These boys made no stirabouts such as Daisy had devotedly served to



her father, but they showed an admirable talent for toasted cheese sandwiches. They had occasional trips to drive-in movies to see Westerns, while Daisy's chief diversion had consisted of afternoon visits at St. Angelo with her eccentric aunt. For wider excursions Daisy had New York City and the boys had Europe when their mother was asked to speak at an international conference.

The presence of a family has given several new turns to the life of the college president. Not only has Mrs. Pannell been the first president to tour campus, at her son's invitation, on the back seat of a motor-scooter but she has been the first to belong to the Parent-Teachers Association in Amherst. And her unique domestic capacity once enabled her to save a banquet speaker at the college from a dilemma with a minimum of embarrassment. He found himself disabled with neuritis and one hand lay useless in his lap. When he was served Mrs. Pannell matter-of-factly reached for his plate, and reduced his meat to manageable dimensions while he looked on gratefully. "I've been cutting up young men's meat for nearly ten years," she commented as she passed his plate back to him.

It is typical of Mrs. Pannell to do practical things with dispatch and dispassion, to have them done and away so that she can turn her attention to other things. "The roof has to be kept in repair and the gutter may have to be mended," she says. "I don't particularly *like* seeing that roofs are repaired, but I'll get them done. I'll stay up late at night if necessary to do the housekeeping but I won't ever consider it the most important thing."

What does seem important to her may be deduced from an early interview between her and a member of the board of directors of Sweet Briar: "Why would you want to come to the country to a small college that hasn't much money?" he asked.

"Because I have seen the constant and unremitting effort to get and hold a good faculty at Sweet Briar," was her prompt response.

So Mrs. Pannell came to Sweet Briar with an apprecia-

tion for it. And she was precipitately drawn into a whirlpool of activity which has given her, perhaps more than any of its other presidents, the opportunity to tell alumnae, friends, and strangers of her faith in the liberal arts college for women, and in Sweet Briar in particular.

An unending series of trips and speaking engagements has filled her calendar ever since she became president. She started with visits to secondary schools. Since the war nearly all colleges have been swamped with applications for admission but this has not meant that their administrators could sit quietly back and let the mail roll in. On the contrary, competition for the best students is as keen as ever. During her first year as president Mrs. Pannell willingly lent herself to the admissions office, and it was she who appeared at a goodly portion of the 93 schools which received visits from Sweet Briar that year.

More alumnae were asked to serve as representatives on admission and their number was increased from 56 in 1950 to 120 in 1951. A "Young Traveler" was also added to the staff, a recent graduate who could bring information which preparatory school girls would want to hear from one who had just been viewing the college as a student. A year or two later, girls from strong preparatory schools in Virginia were invited to visit campus and become acquainted with it at first hand.

Another great concern which enlisted the enthusiastic support of the president and other officers of the college as well as alumnae, students, parents, and friends throughout the country, originated in 1951. In February of that year the college celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the granting of a charter to Sweet Briar Institute. Instead of limiting this anniversary to a self-congratulatory celebration the president and board resolved that, in 1956, the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of college, there should be some substantial gift to mark that momentous occasion.

Plans were formulated to raise money for a new dormitory, a science building, an auditorium—and an amount for endowment equal to the cost of all the buildings. The



goal was to raise two and a half million dollars and to establish a permanent organization to sustain a program of annual giving such as exists today in almost every well financed private liberal arts college.

An alumna member of the board of overseers, Sara Shallenberger (Mrs. W. L. Lyons Brown) of the class of 1932, was selected in May 1951 as chairman of the development committee which was to put these plans into effect. For two years before the formal announcement of the program's existence at commencement in 1953, Mrs. Brown did arduous spadework. After extensive research into college fund-raising she devised a development program to fit Sweet Briar's own needs.

Except for a brief initial survey professional fund-raisers were not employed and the work of soliciting funds was assumed by the president of the college, members of the board, alumnae, students, and parents of students. In May 1952 Robert J. Sailstad came to Sweet Briar as resident director of the development program. He outlined and enthusiastically put into effect various activities of the program, maintaining all the while a deliberate pace so that everyone participating in the program could be well informed. As alumna chairman for the entire program, Edith Durrell, '21 (Mrs. Edward C. Marshall) enlisted alumnae committees by states and in cities, and she continues to keep a large organization of volunteer workers in good running order.

In 1954 when Mrs. Brown was forced to relinquish her position because of illness in her family, Dr. Connie Guion, a member of the board of overseers since 1950, became chairman of the development program. Since that time the program has spread its influence throughout the country—and as far as Honolulu and London where meetings have been held in the name of Sweet Briar. Husbands of alumnae, some who have never even seen the college, are becoming aware of its potentialities as an American institution; they are joining their wives in making "family gifts" to Sweet Briar as a continuing support to the college.

When Mr. Sailstad resigned late in 1955, he was suc-

ceeded by John H. Detmold, who is now directing the development program.

In May 1956 more than \$1,600,000 had been given or pledged. One of the most gratifying aspects of this sum is that nearly \$600,000 of it has come from "the family"—that is, alumnae and parents of students. This is striking testimony to their confidence in Sweet Briar College.

Mrs. Pannell has represented Sweet Briar in another plan for adding financial strength which found expression in the incorporation in 1952 of twelve colleges into the Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges. This foundation makes possible a united appeal of member colleges to industry and business in Virginia to aid in the support of the state's private liberal arts colleges; the income of the foundation is to be divided among member colleges on a pro-rated basis.

These programs give Mrs. Pannell a heavy schedule of travel and speaking, with as many as fifty off-campus appointments in a year. Besides her administrative duties she also teaches in alternate years an advanced course in history, "Origins of the United States." Most persons would find this a punishing routine, but she continues to fill her engagements with enthusiasm and to speak with persuasive animation on whatever topic is scheduled. Somehow she also finds time to read, voraciously and extensively. The library staff is constantly amazed by the quantity and variety of books the president draws and carries home, literally by the armful, returning in a few days for a fresh supply.

During two of her years at Sweet Briar she assumed duties contingent upon her position as chairman of the international relations committee in the American Association of University Women. For many years she has been a leader in the A.A.U.W. and has more than once addressed meetings in Europe of the International Federation of University Women, with which the A.A.U.W. is affiliated.

In 1953 Mrs. Pannell was invited by the German govern-



ment to spend a month with a group of prominent American educators inspecting schools and universities in post-war Germany. Although this was another time-consuming event she promptly reviewed her German grammar and joined the tour. It was another opportunity to extend her own horizon as she feels deeply the obligation of educated people to be well informed. In her own words, "Where attainable knowledge could have changed an issue, ignorance is *vice*."

It is abundantly clear, of course, that the pursuit of attainable knowledge may be one of the cardinal objectives of an educational institution while its presiding officer is absorbed in quite different corollary tasks. In the footsteps of her predecessors—in the footsteps, in fact of every college president—Mrs. Pannell had to face not only long-term planning for endowment but also the immediate problems of annual budgets. In 1952 she had to recommend to the board another increase in fees, from \$1,600 to \$2,000. This was a rather breath-taking increase, especially when one considers that Miss Glass, sitting on the board which voted this action, could look back to the day when she came as president and the fees were \$650.

This change, however, enabled the board to grant Mrs. Pannell's request to raise salaries, and a 10% increase for the entire faculty and staff became effective in that year. Faculty salaries still remained well out of line with the annual income of other professions but several advantages in other forms did accrue at this time.

For one, Sweet Briar joined the Tuition Exchange Plan which permits either sons or daughters of staff and faculty members to have a tuition-free education, on a quota basis, in one of more than twenty member colleges. For another, encouragement to professors with younger families was offered by the creation in 1953 of a nursery school on campus, a project which Mrs. Pannell enthusiastically promoted. In conjunction with the school, a course in nursery school practice is offered and Sweet Briar students gain experience as apprentice teachers.

And looking to the future the board voted to make available to faculty a benefit designed for those who retire during times of inflation. Since persons on fixed incomes suffer most from inflation, a College Retirement Equities Fund (CREF) has been established through which an instructor may earmark up to half of his retirement allotment for investment in common stocks. His retirement annuity is then not a fixed sum but a part of it fluctuates with the market. CREF is administered through the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association (TIAA) in which Sweet Briar participates in a program for faculty annuities. Added to social security benefits, these arrangements expand the program for retirement pay which was begun during Miss Glass's administration.

Ways and means of improving faculty salaries continued to be of paramount concern to Mrs. Pannell. In May 1956 there was occasion for rejoicing when Sweet Briar's share of the funds procured through the Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges enabled the board to give the faculty and staff an "anniversary present" of a new 10% salary increase for 1956-57. This was in addition to an increase in salaries for all teachers adopted by the board the preceding November which had applied retroactively to July 1, 1955. These two substantial gains brought faculty salaries into line with the new scale recommended in a faculty committee study of salary scales in comparable colleges.

Regardless of what other problems present themselves, attention to curriculum can never wane. Every administration of Sweet Briar, including the present one, has faced a difficulty which troubled Miss Benedict, namely, how to deal with the tremendous variation in preparation for college which appears in each entering class. Attempts to take these differences into account—and most liberal arts colleges are today making such attempts—have resulted in a flexibility in requirements for the degree which may well amaze some of the older alumnae.

This shift from a tendency for definite prescription



toward a wider range of electives has been going on for some time, both in Sweet Briar and elsewhere. Today requirements for graduation are, in brief, these: twelve hours of English are still a "must" for graduation but there is considerable latitude in how these may be earned. The regular course designed for freshmen may be bypassed by those with advanced preparation or, on the other hand, those not soundly grounded in English go into a group which has more intensive drill in grammar and composition. And a choice is now offered in sophomore year for either American or English literature—instead of the former prescribed survey of English literature. A corrective course in speech is given to students who have not already achieved a certain standard of diction.

There used to be one course and one teacher that all Sweet Briar students had in common: hygiene, given by Dr. Harley. This is supplanted by a course in health education from which a student may be exempted by passing an achievement examination. Other requirements include six hours of music, drama, or art, and a year's course in American history or government for those who have not had such a course in secondary school. Proficiency in a foreign language is still necessary and also at least a nodding acquaintance with the classics. Either a year of Latin or Greek will satisfy the latter requisite, or else a comprehensive survey of classical civilization, a course conducted in English which receives wide acclaim from the students.

This course was originated in the mid-thirties by H. Gary Hudson, professor of history. It evolved into its present form under the direction of two scholars in classics and ancient history, Miss Gertrude Malz and Miss Eva Sanford, and half a dozen departments collaborate in giving it. Lectures are supplemented at frequent intervals by discussions in small class sections. Most students are agreed that "C.C. is a tough course" and they enjoy groaning over the amount of reading it requires, yet at the end of the year many pronounce it "the best course I've had in college."

The renown of "C.C." is such that it is widely appreciated as a target for satire in nearly every senior show.

New avenues to the Sweet Briar degree have been opened recently, with the adoption of policies which permit greater flexibility in planning a program of studies. Scores made by a student on the tests administered by the College Entrance Examination Board, including those which are required for admission and the Advanced Placement Test, are used for more effective placement in courses above the freshman level. Students with high standing are not held to a uniform pattern of progression in college, but are encouraged to advance at a rate which is commensurate with their aptitude for learning and their earlier preparation. A freshman may now be enrolled in courses above the elementary level in almost every department, a practice which has been most frequently used in foreign languages or English literature. Students already in college may advance more rapidly than is usual, on the basis of their college records and by means of special examinations offered by the various departments.

In order to point up strengths and weaknesses among individual students as well as in the class as a whole, and as a basis for comparison with their counterparts in other colleges, special series of tests designed for sophomores by the Educational Testing Service have been administered several times at Sweet Briar in recent years. Group averages prove stimulating to the class. In 1953, for instance, Sweet Briar sophomores had the satisfaction of knowing that on one of the tests they ranked first among sophomores from 130 colleges, fifth on another—and it was all too clear to them in what field they needed more work when they learned that they stood thirty-fourth on another.

In summary, for a Sweet Briar degree there are the basic requirements in language and literature, science, social studies, and the arts with which students in most liberal arts colleges are familiar, but there is considerable range of the possibilities by which a student satisfies these requirements. In 1953 the last fixed points were removed by which one navigated for four years the channels of the



curriculum to, at last, a baccalaureate in arts. Now no single academic course is an absolute requisite for graduation from Sweet Briar.

Besides scheduled courses, visits of outside lecturers, artists, and ministers have always been an important intellectual stimulus. Of late this program has been modified every two or three years by reducing somewhat the number of lectures and concerts and having a symposium instead. For several days the campus gives itself over to a consideration of one comprehensive topic. Well-informed and stimulating speakers produce a real ferment of ideas as they lecture, question, and encourage student discussion. Wishing to share this rich and exciting experience with students from other colleges the Sweet Briar girls invited student delegates from a large number of liberal arts colleges in the eastern United States to attend the most recent symposium, "Understanding Asia." These young men and women guests thoroughly enjoyed a symposium weekend at Sweet Briar and contributed much to the liveliness of the discussions. Since Miss Glass initiated the first symposium, other topics have included national needs and resources, reconstruction in an era of atomic power, the role of the colleges in promoting peace through world understanding, and the arts.

The spring of the golden anniversary year, 1956, brought a supplement to the symposium pattern. A full day's program on careers after college was given by a number of alumnae who returned to the campus to tell the students about opportunities in their chosen vocational fields.

Indiana Fletcher Williams wished for "a school to impart to its students such education in sound learning, and such physical, moral, and religious training as shall, in the judgment of the directors, best fit them to be useful members of society."

If emphasis thus far in the history of that "school" has seemed to center on "sound learning" it must be stated that at no time has the full import of Mrs. Williams' wish

for "physical, moral, and religious training" been overlooked. The first student government undertook to see that each student had an hour's exercise each day; the first president encouraged campers by sleeping out with them and swimmers by guarding them in a row-boat. And in 1912 Miss Cara Gascoigne arrived to start an unusually well directed program of physical education.

Miss Harriet Rogers who came as director of physical education in 1924 has continued and amplified this program. With intelligence and enthusiasm she has turned to advantage the natural invitation to outdoor life offered by Sweet Briar's climate and rural location. Her influence in field hockey and riding has gone far beyond the bounds of the college through her continuing efforts in the training of instructors for these sports. She has also collaborated with Dr. Rice, the college physician, in integrating an excellent course in health education.

The board of overseers continues to recognize that good food in the refectories makes no small contribution to the health of Sweet Briar, although it did in 1928 decide that courses in food preparation did not enhance a liberal arts education. It abolished home economics classes (which might have given Miss Indie a pang) and gave the equipment to the Indian Mission (which would not have displeased Miss Indie). The tradition that regular boarders anywhere must complain about food has crumbled at Sweet Briar under the ministrations of several notable directors of refectories—Miss Fannie Carroll, Miss Jane Weatherlow (later Mrs. Carl Jensen), and Mrs. Linda Brown. A recent graduate reports that the appetizing quality of fare has changed so little that her returning alumna mother remarked with a sigh, "You *still* can't lose weight here!"

Moral training is promoted by efforts which are often indefinable and the effects may be difficult to assay. However, Sweet Briar's strong student government offers practice in exercising responsibility, and in making decisions of real consequence in disciplinary matters. Sweet Briar



students have surely derived strength from the demands put upon them and from the relative freedom from authority granted them from the very beginning of the college. Miss Benedict showed a genius for refraining from making decisions for others, and students under her were experienced in weighing questions of right and wrong, in matters pertaining both to themselves as individuals and to the students as a group. They and their successors gained strength also through the honor system, which involves the twofold responsibility of each girl to meet a high standard of honor and to influence others likewise to meet it. This concept is upheld and cherished as one of Sweet Briar's greatest assets.

Another strong influence at Sweet Briar is the Young Women's Christian Association. Organized in the first year of the college, it gives opportunities to meet social responsibilities as well as to deepen religious experience. The YWCA has carried on various types of social service in Amherst County, and its members share in worship leadership at the college where each month they also sponsor four lively discussion meetings. Student-led, with faculty participation, these serve to supplement academic courses in religion.

Sweet Briar is represented at regional and national meetings of the YWCA, and its students have attended seminars in Washington and New York of the American Friends Service Committee. They have participated in work camps sponsored by the Committee and by the College Cévenol in France, and some take part in the Experiment in International Living.

Students are also influenced by faculty alertness to social responsibility. Even when it was a time-consuming adventure to reach the town of Amherst many of the faculty assumed duties as citizens of that community. From Miss Sparrow in former years to Bertha Pfister Wailes at present, many Sweet Briar teachers have given leadership to the Amherst County Health Association and Mrs. Wailes has been the moving spirit of Amherst's Home Demonstration Club. In fact, her service to rural citizens throughout

the state brought an honor award from Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Miss Crawford, busy on the mental health program of the county and in civic and political organizations, demonstrates her belief that a philosopher who is only speculative is not worth his salt.

Miss Möller gives many an afternoon to administering intelligence tests in county schools, as a part of their guidance program, and Mr. De Rocco has been active in different phases of county planning and welfare work. Miss Ethel Ramage enjoys a busman's holiday by teaching a Sunday School class at Ascension Church where she and her sister also sing in the choir. Some faculty wives teach in the county schools and as parents many have participated in the Parent-Teachers Association. This is only part of a record which testifies to the conviction shared by every Sweet Briar president and every effective member of the faculty that it is necessary for thinkers to assume responsibility in the world and commit themselves to action. As Mrs. Pannell has forcefully asserted, "Thinkers have to be heroes as well as idealists!"

Mrs. Williams' concern for religious training has also been the concern of many individuals associated with Sweet Briar. We have the word of Dr. and Mrs. Rollins—who ought to know—that "religion has always been both vital and natural on the campus." Mrs. Rollins has written an amplification of this statement: "For the first two years after the college opened it was difficult to get Sunday preachers with regularity, and Bishop Randolph and Mr. Gray often filled the pulpit. Then, from 1908 to 1920, the Reverend Wallace E. Rollins and the Reverend Thomas D. Lewis successively served as resident chaplains and professors of religion. Since that time, it has been the custom to have visiting ministers for the Sunday morning services. These guest preachers come from the churches and theological faculties of different denominations and include outstanding religious leaders of the country. Choral music supplied by the student choir enriches the Sunday worship service.



"Weekday religious services have also been a continuing part of the college life, in the early years held daily and since then, twice a week. They are frequently led by students, who also plan and conduct the daily Lenten services and the YWCA Sunday vespers. Since 1932, attendance at all religious services has been entirely voluntary and this has seemed to increase their significance to the community.

"Students and faculty members have brought with them religious convictions and practices drawn from many different backgrounds. Although Episcopalians and Presbyterians have been in the majority, students have come from all the main branches of Protestantism, from Roman Catholicism, from Judaism, and occasionally from Hinduism, Islam or Buddhism. It has been typical of Sweet Briar students that they have been concerned to understand and appreciate religious beliefs and experiences that differ from their own."

Since 1933, when a major in religion was instituted, all academic work in religion has been elective, and in the past ten years, more than 70% of graduates have elected courses in this department.

Another indication of interest in religion at Sweet Briar is the nature of the memorial to Dr. Eugene Lyman established shortly after his death in 1948. Dr. Lyman's keen mind and gentle spirit had quickened the entire community. The class of 1949 was moved to dedicate its *Briar Patch* to his memory, and friends both within and outside the college founded the Eugene William Lyman Lectureship to bring distinguished theological scholars to campus.

Since the founding of Sweet Briar there has been impressive agreement among all those governing its educational policy that the goal of the college is to help young women become useful members of society. The judgment of the directors has led them to employ to that end the means of a traditional liberal arts education extended directly into the vital issues of our own day. Sweet Briar has not sought to make its contribution by means of

striking innovation. From the enunciation of Mrs. Williams there has been only such modification and expansion as would meet the increasing demands of twentieth century life. For fifty years Sweet Briar has aimed to enable students to discover and master information, to evaluate what they have found, to enjoy this mastery and evaluation, to grow as individuals in the process, and to employ their capacity to discover and weigh facts in the course of acting as informed citizens. New buildings, increased endowment, and more students are not expected to bring about any change in the essential character of Sweet Briar.

And what may this essential character be?

Sweet Briar's history reveals that in goal and method it bears marked resemblance to many another liberal arts college. But the impress of strong and individual people is the real characteristic of any institution, and Sweet Briar bears the personal stamp of the men and women who have constituted the college. Its distinction lies chiefly with them.

The place itself has meaning; living with beauty does not leave one untouched. There are the Georgian buildings, dignified but not austere. There are the gardens of Sweet Briar House, rather casually arranged, depending for charm more on the variety of individual plants and trees than upon formal design. There are the century-old boxwoods, apparently innumerable. And there is the skillfully artless landscaping of campus vistas—the road winding up through the woods from the entrance, the rolling meadows above the dairy, the lake, and beyond it the lovely and vast background of the Blue Ridge. On first glance this beauty is striking; after four years it has become a permanent possession. Miss Glass has remarked that when she met alumnae who had not seen Sweet Briar for years their memory of its beauty was the first thing they wanted to talk about.

There is another quality that belongs to Sweet Briar—an unusually close association among students, faculty,



and staff. A member of the faculty has named as one attribute of a good college "the excitement of concentrated living with a group of students and teachers dedicated to the same value-structure." Everyone who stays long enough at Sweet Briar seems to sense this excitement, and is more or less articulate about it. One professor, not yet in residence a year, even called the author of this history by long distance telephone to make certain that she had understood his delight in this characteristic of the college which he had found unique in a long and varied teaching career.

The closeness of Sweet Briar's faculty and students obviously depends in part on its size. The enrollment reached 500 as the new dormitory, named after William Bland Dew, was opened in September 1956. A ratio of 1 faculty member to 8 students is more than a statistical datum. It means that most classes are small enough to invite an easy exchange among their members and to facilitate a real meeting of minds. This is a value which cannot be overestimated in an era when lectures in some universities are delivered through public address systems to classes numbering in the hundreds.

Some might say that the quintessence of Sweet Briar is its small community, undiluted by a surrounding village; there are 700 persons present for reasons specifically related to the college. This geographical isolation has acted in some degree as an automatic selector of personnel. Enjoyment of the out-of-doors, absorption in the main occupations of college life, and some ingenuity in entertaining oneself in leisure hours are almost essential for Sweet Briar residents.

In the past decade interplay between college and off-campus institutions has increased to such a degree that many find the word "isolation" meaningless as applied to Sweet Briar. More and more have Sweet Briar's presidents, faculty, and students been caught up in a network of contacts beyond campus. However, it may still be noted that the rural location of the college insures that these contacts

are not fortuitous; they can be selected to carry forward purposes aligned with the chief goal of the college.

Mrs. Lyman, during her years as dean from 1940 to 1950, clearly sensed the peculiar value of this concentration of the community, as well as the potency of the influence of those strong characters who appear throughout Sweet Briar's history. In pondering how it was that she and her associates in the dean's office sustained a vital concern for each of the myriad problems which came to them year after year she wrote: "Was it the fact that our community was close-knit and compact, and thus we saw the meaning of every small decision in the light of its application to the whole? Or was it the vision of this college cherished by founders, presidents, faculty, and alumnae, that it should take its place in the southern educational scene as a first-rate academic institution, and that the vision had to be brought to life without the aid of adequate endowment and against the hazard of being off the beaten track, away from metropolitan contacts such as libraries, easy professional exchange, and nearby learned society meetings? Was it the dynamic quality of certain personalities fortunately linked with the history of this college conveying to us lesser folk the sense of mission to education, Christian character, citizenship and community service that lay upon the work of every member of the faculty and staff of Sweet Briar? Perhaps the causes cannot be fully analyzed, but the results were patently clear: everything we did was important."

As Dr. Rollins once said, "If Mr. and Mrs. Williams could have known, in the sad days after Daisy's death, what the institution they were founding would become they would have had a peace and joy that were denied them then."

Elijah Fletcher, too, could gaze with content at Sweet Briar today. His well tended house and garden would please him and the present size and beauty of the trees he planted would delight him. He would rue the loss of almost a thousand of Sweet Briar's countless trees to



Hurricane Hazel in 1954—but he would nod with satisfaction to hear that they had been sold for several thousand dollars as lumber. He would visit classes with interest and regard with approval this education of women, since, as he wrote in 1810, "they are the ones who have the first education of children and ought to be qualified to instruct them correctly." And he could warm to the realization of how many parents of today are in hearty concurrence with the conviction which he communicated to his brother Calvin in 1842: "A good education is the best fortune which we can give our children."

## NOTE ON SOURCES

Letters, notes, and reports of interviews which were used in writing this book are deposited in the Mary Helen Cochran Library at Sweet Briar. They contain specific references to the sources, most of which are on file in that library—the college catalogue, student handbook, *Briar Patch* (yearbook), various issues of the college's bulletin series, the *Sweet Briar News*, and the *Alumnae News*.

The backbone of the administrative chronicle comes from minutes of boards of directors and overseers, presidents' reports, and faculty minutes. Anecdotes, personal descriptions and evaluations from faculty, alumnae and staff form a great part of the narrative. Many of these were especially written for the committee which, under the chairmanship of the late Miss Eva Sanford, started in 1952 to collect material for a history of Sweet Briar. In this category valuable accounts came from Mary K. Benedict, Jessamine Chapman Williams, Connie Guion, Nan Powell Hodges, Caroline Sparrow, Eugenia Griffin Burnett, Virginia McLaws, Adeline Ames, and Nancy Coale Worthington.

Martha von Briesen's work in the public relations office puts her in touch with a certain amount of Sweet Briar history but her enthusiastic pursuit of it goes far beyond the call of duty. At all stages in the preparation of this book she has been not only my chief encourager and abettor but she also proved to be a veritable warehouse of information which she willingly passed on in its most usable forms. For example, she had written good accounts of interviews in Lynchburg with Mrs. N. C. Manson and with Miss Ella Miller, born in 1850 and hale enough in 1954 to talk of Elijah's Lynchburg house which her family had purchased from him, and of the romance of Indie and John Collins.

M. Dee Long is the other person for whom Sweet Briar history was a real absorption. She had visited at Fletcher Farm and she had traveled to Indianapolis to read Calvin Fletcher's diary. She wrote to members of Miss McVea's family and she went to Cincinnati to talk to Miss McVea's friends there. She would have done even more for the history but for the illness which limited her activities for some time before her death.

Many faculty members and many alumnae have supplied enlightening comments on student life and information on different topics. For one, Florence Robinson spent many hot summer days searching the files of the *Lynchburg News* in the Jones Memorial Library in Lynchburg for data on the period 1900-1906. I feel personally indebted to all these, even though I know that they gave their time and thought for the benefit of the college more than for me.



I was able to talk with a number of persons directly involved in this story. It was exciting to me to hear from Eliza Payne Eskridge about the events leading up to Indiana's death and the finding of the will, to be sitting in Fletcher Farm itself when I heard the tale of Mary Fletcher Charlton's discovery of Elijah's letters. I had a number of diverting talks with Dr. Rollins who knows most of the leading characters in Sweet Briar history and with Mrs. Dew who knows equally as many. Both of these old friends of the college have also written accounts of various phases of the history.

Depth was added to my own perception of Sweet Briar's development in talks also with the Walkers—Miss Ruby, Dr. Will and Miss Winifred; with Margaret Banister, Ruth Howland, Lucy S. Crawford, Marion Benedict Rollins, Bernice D. Lill, Bertha Pfister Wailes, Lois Ballenger, and Eugenie Morenus—who said she did not write anything for the history "because, being a mathematician, I didn't think I was very good at telling stories." (She was wrong.)

Of the presidents, I had met Miss Benedict and I know the last three fairly well. Miss Benedict was too ill for conversation when the history was being written but her sister, Miss Florence Benedict, very kindly recorded and forwarded statements dictated by Miss Mary in answer to questions which I submitted. Miss Glass I knew when I was a student in 1930-1934, and two years ago I visited her in Charlottesville to learn more about the college through her eyes. Miss Lucas not only corresponded with me but she had produced a welcome mitigation in the work of the historian by writing after she had resigned a *précis* of events of her administration. Mrs. Pannell has been hospitable, communicative, critical, and interested during the whole writing of the history.

And to Julia Sadler de Coligny, tactful liaison officer and supplier of facts in desperate moments, I am grateful for getting me into this fascinating business in the first place.

M.L.L.S.

## MISS BENEDICT'S LATER YEARS

After Miss Benedict left Sweet Briar in 1916 she continued and completed at Johns Hopkins her training as a physician. For more than twenty-five years she practiced medicine, first as resident physician at Connecticut College for Women and later in New Haven, Connecticut.

In her later years Sweet Briar, in spite of the long interval since her official association with it, again became her dominant interest. She returned as commencement speaker in 1930, on Founders' Day in 1942, and again in 1945 when the scholarship established in her name was presented to the college. There were other short visits and after her retirement she passed a winter in Amherst, living next door to Mrs. Dew.

Although grievously incapacitated in 1952 by a cerebral hemorrhage, she literally lived to see Sweet Briar celebrate its golden anniversary. The first event of the anniversary year was the Charter Day celebration on February 9, 1956. It seems as if in this event Miss Benedict had seen her hopes fulfilled, for on the next day she died.



## APPENDIX I

*A. Board of Directors, 1906-1956*

As specified by the charter of incorporation granted by the Commonwealth of Virginia in February, 1901, the board of directors includes seven members, elected for life. They are empowered to hold all properties in trust and to fill any vacancy which may occur in their numbers. The first directors were named by the four trustees of the estate of Indiana Fletcher Williams, under the terms of whose will Sweet Briar College was founded.

Mrs. W. L. Lyons Brown (Sara Shallenberger, '32), 1952-  
Mrs. Charles R. Burnett (Eugenia Griffin, '10), 1921-1951  
The Reverend Theodore M. Carson, 1901-1902  
Mr. Allen Cucullu, 1925-1943  
Mr. Robert L. Cumnock, 1921-1942  
Mr. William E. Dodd, 1923-1930  
The Reverend Carl E. Grammer, 1901-1944; President, 1917-1933  
The Reverend Arthur T. Gray, 1901-1921  
Mr. Stephen R. Harding, 1901-1903  
Mr. Charles E. Heald, 1906-1919  
Mr. Edward Jenkins, 1944-1954  
Mr. Dabney S. Lancaster, 1943-  
President, 1955-  
Mr. Rowland Lea, 1942-  
Mr. J. M. McBryde, 1901-1906  
Mr. N. C. Manson, Jr., 1903-1924  
Mr. R. Walton Moore, 1918-1921  
Dr. James Morrison, 1933-1940  
Mrs. Beverly B. Munford, 1919-1921  
Mr. D. A. Payne, 1918-1938  
Mr. C. Raine Pettyjohn, 1951-  
The Right Reverend A. M. Randolph, 1901-1917; President, 1901-1917  
Mr. Fergus Reid, 1905-1941; President, 1933-1941  
Mr. Archibald G. Robertson, 1942-  
President, 1949-1955  
Mr. W. Gerhard Suhling, 1939-1955  
The Right Reverend Beverley D. Tucker, Jr., 1934-1952; President, 1942-1949  
Judge Legh R. Watts, 1901-1918  
Mr. John S. Zinsser, 1955-

## APPENDIX

### B. Board of Overseers, 1927-1956

Established in May, 1927, the board of overseers is composed of the seven directors and additional members, elected by the directors, most of whom serve six-year terms and may be re-elected. The first alumnae were named to the board of overseers in 1934. At present, alumnae are elected for four-year terms and may not succeed themselves. The active oversight of the college is in the hands of the larger board, whose decisions are submitted for ratification to the board of directors. The president of the college is *ex-officio* a member of the board of overseers. Since 1954, the president of the alumnae association has served *ex-officio* as a member of this board.

Mrs. Fred C. Andersen (Katherine Blount, '26), 1956-  
Mrs. A. Kent Balls (Elizabeth Franke, '13), 1934-1940  
Miss Margaret S. Banister, '16, 1946-1952  
Mrs. Richard E. Barnes (Elsetta Gilchrist, '27), 1943-1949  
Mr. Barron F. Black, 1953-  
Mr. Thomas C. Boushall, 1949-  
\*Mrs. W. L. Lyons Brown (Sara Shallenberger, '32), 1949-1952  
Mr. John Stewart Bryan, 1927-1930  
Mrs. Calvert G. deColigny (Julia Sadler, '34), 1953-1955  
Mrs. Joseph W. Cox, Jr. (Edna Lee, '26), 1940-1946  
Mr. Robert W. Daniel, 1937-1940  
Mrs. James N. Frazer (Rebecca Young, '35), 1955-  
Senator Carter Glass, 1927-1946  
Miss Meta Glass, 1929-  
Mrs. Margaret Grant, '15, 1937-1943  
Dr. Connie M. Guion, 1950-  
Mr. H. H. Harris, 1927  
Mrs. E. Webster Harrison (Mary Huntington, '30), 1950-1956  
Mrs. William T. Hodges (Annie Powell, '10), 1954-  
\*Mr. Edward Jenkins, 1936-1944  
\*Mr. Dabney S. Lancaster, 1942-1943  
\*Mr. Rowland Lea, 1940-1942  
Mrs. Edward C. Marshall, 1946-1951  
Mr. Adrian M. Massie, 1952-  
Mr. James D. Mooney, 1927-1946  
Mr. Arthur J. Morris, 1929-1937  
\*Dr. James Morrison, 1930-1933  
Mr. Charles H. Murchison, 1952-  
Mr. William N. Neff, 1946-1951  
\*Mr. C. Raine Pettyjohn, 1944-1951  
\*Mr. Archibald G. Robertson, 1941-1942  
Mrs. Ralph A. Rotnem (Alma Martin, '36), 1952-  
Mr. Buford Scott, 1953-  
Mr. O. M. W. Sprague, 1939-1948  
\*Mr. W. Gerhard Suhling, 1938-1939  
Mr. S. E. Thomason, 1927-1930  
\*The Right Reverend Beverley D. Tucker, Jr., 1930-1934  
Mr. Lawson W. Turner, Sr., 1955-  
Mr. Edward T. Wailes, 1953-  
Mrs. Russell Walcott (Eugenia Buffington, '13), 1952-1954  
Mr. Gorham B. Walker, Jr., 1955-  
Mrs. Herbert D. Warner, 1955-  
The Right Reverend Richard S. Watson, 1952-  
Mr. Robert A. Weaver, 1943-1949  
Mrs. William H. Williamson, Jr. (Martha Lee, '25), 1934-1937  
Mr. H. Parker Willis, 1927-1937  
\*Mr. John S. Zinsser, 1951-1955

\* Elected to board of directors



# APPENDIX II

## Faculty of Sweet Briar College, 1906-1956

(Limited to faculty members, beginning with rank of instructor)

Name	Subject	Came to Sweet Briar	Stayed until
Abel-Henderson, Anne H.	History	1924	1925
Adams, Elizabeth	Chemistry	1932	1939
Adcock, Florence	Biology	1926	1929
Albright, John G.	Physics	1925	1927
Alexander, Jeanne	Music	1918	1919
Alkire, Helen	Physical Education	1939	1940
Allen, Barbara M.	Physical Education	1950	1952
Allison, Edmund P.	Music	1954	
Ames, Adeline	Biology	1920	1945
Ammon, Harry	History	1947	1948
Anderson, Carrolle E.	Biology	1945	1949
Arnold, Margery E.	Physical Education	1940	1943
Austin, Horace R.	Modern Languages	1936	1937
Badger, Helen L.	Physical Education	1929	1930
* Bailey, Elmer James	English	1924	1926
† Baird, Alexander	Economics and Government	1945	1945
Barbour, Florence	Music	1917	1919
Bard, Mildred	Physical Education	1929	1932
Barker, Joseph E.	Romance Languages;	1930	
	Junior Year in France Director	1948	
Barry, Evelyn Claire	Music	1950	1951
* Bartlett, Alanette	Modern Languages	1910	1929
Barton, Eleanor Dodge	Art	1953	
Batcheller, Alice	Physical Education	1924	1926
Bates, Arthur S.	Modern Languages	1948	
Bates, Carolyn	English	1948	1949
Bates, Grace E.	Mathematics	1943	1944
Beard, Belle Boone	Sociology	1931	
Beglin, Richard W.	English	1955	
Belcher, Jane C.	Biology	1940	
* Benedict, Mary K.	President and Professor of Philosophy and Psychology	1906	1916
* Bennett, Joseph Dexter	English	1929	1941
Bennett, Miriam Frances	Biology	1954	

\* Known deceased

† One semester or less

# APPENDIX

Name	Subject	Came to Sweet Briar	Stayed until
† Berea, Dorothy	Physical Education	1950	1950
* Berkeley, William Noland	Physics, Chemistry, Geology	1906	1907
Bernheimer, Franz K.	Art	1946	
Betts, Edith	Physical Education	1943	1945
* Blake, Marguerite	Music	1907	1908
† Blake, Marion E.	Art	1936	1936
Blalock, Sarah L.	Music	1921	1924
de Boer, Josephine	Romance Languages	1928	1931
Boone, Gladys	Economics	1931	
Boudreaux, Maria	Modern Languages	1927	1936
Bouton, Margaret	Art	1939	1940
Bower, Julia	Mathematics	1927	1930
Boyd, Alma	Physical Education	1940	1942
Bradley, J. Franklin	English	1919	1920
Branch, Elizabeth Spies	Physical Education	1950	1953
		1954	1956
Brandt, Anina Klebe	Psychology	1948	1949
Bricken, Carl	Music	1954	
Brockway, Lillian	Music	1912	1913
Brook, Elizabeth	History	1920	1926
Buckham, Laura T.	Modern Languages	1936	
Bucklew, Anna Lea	Mathematics	1949	1951
Burks, William G.	Modern Languages	1950	1952
Calkins, Helen	Mathematics	1927	1928
Cameron, Turner	Government	1940	1942
Carner, Robert J.	Modern Languages	1947	1948
Carpenter, Mary	Physical Education	1922	1924
Carrington, Elsie Gordon	Physical Education	1920	1923
Carrott, Richard G.	Art	1955	
† Carter, Jeannette Seeds	Biology	1930	1931
Cavallaro, Mary Caroline	Physics and Mathematics	1955	1956
Chaney, Mary E.	Chemistry and Domestic Science	1912	1916
Chapman, Jessamine	Domestic Science	1906	1911
Cherry, Marianna	Physics	1949	1951
* Clement, N. H.	French	1934	1935
Cole, Anna Lewis	French	1907	1910
Cole, Nancy	Mathematics	1933	1943
Collins, Maria Clinton	History	1917	1919
Conklin, Cecile L.	Biology	1925	1926
		1933	1934
* Connor, Carl Y.	English	1927	1955

† One semester or less

\* Known deceased



# APPENDIX

Name	Subject	Came to Sweet Briar	Stayed until
Conrad, Sara E.	English	1918	1919
Corcoran, John Joseph	English	1954	1955
Cordray, Janice Martin	Classics	1954	
* Crawford, Caroline Hill	Music	1909	1921
Crawford, Leonidas W., Jr.	English	1909	1911
Crawford, Lucy Shepard	Philosophy, Psychology and Education	1923	1956
Crocker, Lester Gilbert	Romance Languages	1948	1950
* Cross, Tom Peete	English	1911	1912
* Czarnomska, M. Elizabeth J.	Biblical and Comparative Literature	1919	1931
D'Ancona, Flora L.	Modern Languages	1946	1949
Davies, Frances Ann	Physical Education	1942	1945
Davis, Arthur K., Jr.	English	1926	1927
Davis, Dolly	English	1953	1954
* Davis, Donald Walton	Biology	1907	1909
Davis, Helen E.	Physical Education	1935	1939
Davis, Mary Ellen	Spanish	1952	1954
Delano, Anne Lee	Physical Education	1935	1937
* De Launay, Paul	Art	1906	1907
Dempster, Robert L.	Dramatic Director	1920	1923
DeRocco, Jovan	Art	1940	
Develin, Joseph Chubb	Government	1936	1940
Dickason, Gladys	Economics and Sociology	1926	1930
Dillon, Dorothy	Economics and History	1942	1944
Downs, Thomas L., Jr.	Mathematics	1934	1935
Dunger, Carol	Physical Education	1945	1947
* Dutton, Emily Helen	Dean and Professor of Greek and Latin	1923	1940
Dworski, Sylvia	Romance Languages	1944	1946
Earl, Anna E.	Economics and Sociology	1925	1926
Eastmead, Janet	Physical Training	1911	1912
Eaton, Evelyn	English	1951	
Eberhardt, Gwen L.	Physical Education	1947	1950
Edinger, Lewis J.	History	1950	1951
† Edwards, Gertrud Greig	Economics	1955	1955
Edwards, Preston H.	Physics	1927	1943
		1947	1949
		1953	1954
Edwards, William H.	Political Science	1928	1930
Emerson, Aura B.	Latin and German	1922	1923

\* Known deceased

† One semester or less

# APPENDIX

Name	Subject	Came to Sweet Briar	Stayed until
Esquenazi, Robert M.	Romance Languages	1949	1950
Estes, Dorothy Virginia	Physics	1946	1947
Estill, Virginia G.	Music	1913	1915
Eyre, James K.	Government	1942	1943
Finch, Alfred A.	Music	1931	1945
Finley, Cecile Bolton	Psychology	1939	1942
Fisher, Edgar J.	Government	1948	1953
Fisk, Emma Luella	Botany	1916	1918
Flores, Elena Romero	Romance Languages	1946	1947
Fogg, Helen Hartford	Physical Education	1930	1932
Folsom, Joseph Kirk	Economics and Sociology	1924	1931
Fraser, Jessie Melville	History	1926	1953
* Fraser, Nora Blanding	Latin	1908	1917
Freeman, Sidney Lee	English	1951	
Frost, Winifred	Economics and Sociology	1928	1929
Gardner, Ethel	Music	1907	1913
Gary, Charles McKee	Physics	1923	1925
Gascoigne, Cara	Physical Training	1912	1921
* Gibbons, Lois Oliphant	History	1928	1929
Geraci, Angela M.	Physical Education	1955	
Gilder, Pauline	Music	1910	1912
Gilpin, G. Noble	Music	1946	
Glass, Meta	President and Professor of Latin	1925	1946
Goode, Clement Tyson	English	1915	1922
Goreth, Margaret L.	Physical Education	1927	1929
† Grether, Gertrude	Latin and Roman History	1931	1931
Guillen, Eva Castanon	Romance Languages	1947	1948
Guion, Connie M.	Chemistry	1908	1913
Guion, Josephine	Physical Training	1916	1919
Hadidian, Dikran Y.	Religion	1952	1955
Hadidian, Jean W.	Education	1953	1955
Hadley, Frances	English	1914	1917
Hague, Florence	Biology	1926	1954
† Hallstrom, Henry E.	Music	1948	1949
Hapala, Milan E.	Government and Economics	1947	
Harley, Mary	College Physician and Professor of Physiology and Hygiene	1906	1935
Harpster, Hilda	Biology	1929	1936

\* Known deceased

† One semester or less



# APPENDIX

Name	Subject	Came to Sweet Briar	Stayed until
Harrison, Julia Peachy	Chemistry	1915	1916
Hartmann, Arnold, Jr.	Music	1950	1951
Harvey, Florence	Music	1922	1923
Haughton, Helen K.	Art	1948	1949
Haven, Frances L.	Chemistry	1927	1929
Henderson, Ethel M.	Home Economics	1919	1920
Herbold, Elsie	Biology	1937	1938
Hildebran, Kathryn B.	Modern Languages	1938	1939
Hinojosa, Alvaro	Romance Languages	1921	1923
* Hoogendyk, G. van Rossen	Chemistry	1932	1933
Hopkins, Anne Pleasants	English and Assistant to the Dean	1943	1947
Horst, Patricia	Physical Education	1955	
Hosken, Dean	Religion	1950	
Howell, John M.	Government	1953	1954
Howland, Ruth B.	Biology	1909	1910
		1912	1919
		1920	1924
		1950	1951
		1952	1954
Hoy, Camilla	Romance Languages	1948	1950
Huber, Irene M.	German	1932	1949
Hudson, Dorothy Rose	English	1917	1918
Hudson, Harris Gary	History	1931	1937
Hughes, Agatha Chipley	Education	1955	1956
Hughes, Thomas P.	History	1954	1956
* Hull, Charlotte Kendall	Music	1911	1918
Huebsch, Leila	Home Economics	1918	1919
Hume, Harry Victor	Chemistry	1924	1927
* Humphreys, J. Mitchell	Modern Languages	1906	1910
† Huntress, Erminie	Religion	1935	1936
Hutchinson, Joseph C.	Romance Languages	1950	1951
		1953	1954
Hutter, Claudine	Music	1911	1918
Iwanowski, Roscislaw M.	Mathematics	1947	1949
Jackson, Elizabeth G.	English	1939	1941
Jocher, Katherine C.	Economics and Sociology	1923	1924
Johnson, Cécile Guilmineau	French	1926	
Johnson, Elizabeth F.	Modern Languages	1917	1922
Johnson, Garland	Physical Education	1926	1927
Johnson, Louise Ward	Physical Education	1944	1947
Johnston, Elizabeth H.	Physics and Chemistry	1917	1918

\* Known deceased

† One semester or less

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# APPENDIX

Name	Subject	Came to Sweet Briar	Stayed until
Jones, Alice Sanford	Music	1921	1924
Jones, Margaret L.	Physical Education	1947	1950
Jones, Virgil Laurens	English	1912	1915
Karsen, Sonja P.	Modern Languages	1955	
Kelley, Ethel	Music	1919	1920
Kellogg, Mary Rena	English	1925	1929
Kern, Alfred A.	English	1926	1927
King, Cameron	English	1933	1938
King, Betty Jean	Physical Education	1937	1940
† Kirby, John P.	English	1950	1950
Knapp, Helen Gaylord	English	1943	1947
Krassovsky, Collerohe	Sociology	1941	1942
		1945	1946
Kreusler, Abraham	Modern Languages	1948	1952
Kutzner, Anna	German	1916	1917
† Lanneau, Helen	Greek and Latin	1948	1948
Langwill, Bertha	Chemistry	1918	1919
Larson, Mary	Physical Education	1943	1944
Laukhuff, Perry	Government	1930	1936
Lee, Mary Ann	Mathematics	1946	
Leffler, Esther B.	Chemistry	1953	
Leighton, Frances Howe	Home Economics	1925	1928
Leinbach, Erma	Physics	1928	1929
Levy, Denah	Modern Languages	1954	1955
* Lewis, Thomas Deane	Biblical Literature; Chaplain	1913	1919
Liardet, Emma	French	1914	1915
Linforth, Edward M.	Art	1938	1945
Liron, Anais	Modern Languages	1925	1926
Lobingier, Martha F.	Sociology	1924	1925
* Long, M. Dee	English	1919	1950
Lucas, Martha B.	President and Professor of Philosophy	1946	1950
* Lummis, Katharine	Dean and Professor of Latin	1917	1923
Lyding, Elizabeth	Greek and Latin	1948	1950
Lyman, Mary Ely	Dean and Professor of Religion	1940	1950
Macdonald, Katherine	Physical Education	1949	
MacDonald, Janet	History	1937	1938
* MacFarland, Nannie W.	Latin and History	1912	1914
* MacKaye, Percy	English	1932	1933
MacKinnon, Dorothy	English	1936	1938

† One semester or less

\* Known deceased

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# APPENDIX

Name	Subject	Came to Sweet Briar	Stayed until
MacRae, Anne	Biology	1939	1940
* McBryde, John M., Jr.	English	1906	1909
McCreath, Susanna	Music	1942	1943
McCulloch, Florence T.	Modern Languages	1954	
McCulloch, Rufus W.	English	1919	1920
McDougald, Winifred A.	Music	1936	1937
* McDougale, Ivan Eugene	Economics and Sociology	1919	1924
McGar, Frank Herbert, Jr.	Physics	1951	
McGehee, Frances	Psychology	1949	1950
McGehee, Mary	Latin	1918	1919
McLaws, Virginia Randall	Art	1908	1938
McLean, Agnes K.	Music	1942	1946
McMaster, Albert M. C.	Modern Languages	1914	1916
* McVea, Emilie Watts	President and Professor of English	1916	1925
Malet, Antoinette	French	1919	1923
Mallard, William, Jr.	Religion	1955	
† Mallett, Marcus B.	Philosophy	1937	1938
Malz, Gertrude	Greek and Latin	1930	
Mangiafico, Salvatore C.	Romance Languages	1931	1947
Manning, Bessie	Modern Languages	1926	1927
Marik, Iren	Music	1947	
Martin, Reginald Wesley	Music	1924	1933
Masur, Gerhard	History	1946	
† Mathews, Charles E.	Modern Languages	1937	1937
Matthews, Drue Ella	History; Assistant to the Dean	1939	1943
Maxwell, Jane L.	Chemistry	1949	1952
Michael, James E.	English	1938	1940
Möller, Elisabeth F.	Psychology	1932	
Monack, Louise C.	Chemistry	1945	1947
* Moody, Ethel I.	Mathematics	1930	1933
Moore, Nettie	Modern Languages	1918	1921
		1929	1930
† Moraud, May Elise	Romance Languages	1949	1949
Morenus, Eugenie M.	Mathematics and Latin	1909	1946
* Moses, Susan Williams	Latin and Greek	1906	1908
Mountjoy, Paul T.	Psychology	1955	1956
Mull, Helen K.	Philosophy, Psychology and Education	1927	
Muncy, Lysbeth Walker	History and Government	1943	

\* Known deceased

† One semester or less

# APPENDIX

Name	Subject	Came to Sweet Briar	Stayed until
Murphy, Anne	English	1918	1919
Murray, Elsie	Psychology	1919	1922
Naylor, Julia Jenevieve	Chemistry	1943	1945
Nealley, W. Grafton	Government	1947	1949
Nelson, Lawrence G.	English	1946	
Neuffer, Leonora	Chemistry	1916	1918
* Newell, Louise L.	History and Latin	1923	1927
* Nierman, John L.	Chemistry	1919	1922
* Noyes, Alice	Biology	1910	1912
Oglesby, Roscoe Ralph	Economics and Government	1945	1947
† Olschki, Leonardo	Spanish	1941	1941
* Overly, Irene L.	Music	1913	1914
Palmer, Eleanor Grace	Mathematics	1953	1954
Pannell, Anne Gary	President and Professor of History	1950	
* Patteson, S. Gay	Mathematics	1906	1930
Pearl, Mary J.	Greek and Latin; Dean and Professor	1928	
		1950	
Pearl, O. Merrill	Greek and Latin	1936	1937
Penzoldt, Peter	Modern Languages	1952	
† Perry, Lily M.	Biology	1935	1935
Pettis, Mary Louise	English	1941	1943
Pettit, Sarah	Domestic Science	1911	1913
Pitts, Anna C.	Chemistry	1947	1952
Plaisted, Martha	English	1908	1910
Plevich, Mary	Romance Languages	1950	1952
Pollock, Helen Susanna	Mathematics	1944	1948
Popini, Eloise McCaskill	Social Studies	1944	1945
Powell, Annie M.	English	1910	1912
		1913	1914
Prenez, Blanche	French	1914	1915
* Pryor, Elizabeth	Home Economics	1916	1918
Purcell, Ralph Elliott	Government	1954	
* Puryear, Lucy Goode	English	1912	1913
Ramage, Ethel	English	1928	
Ramage, Sarah Thorpe	English	1935	
Randall, Ethel Claire	English	1923	1929
Rathbone, Eleanor	History	1935	1936
Rauschenbusch, Lisa	English	1940	1946
Rawley, James A.	History	1953	
Raymond, Dora Neill	History	1925	1950
Record, Mason T.	Sociology	1938	1940

\* Known deceased

† One semester or less



## APPENDIX

Name	Subject	Came to Sweet Briar	Stayed until
Reichert, Helen	Music	1920	1921
Reid, Ben L.	English	1951	
Reid, Jane D.	English	1951	1956
Reynolds, Margaret L.	Physical Education	1947	1949
Reynolds, Minna D.	English	1920	1940
Rice, Carol M.	College Physician and Professor of Health Education	1935	
Rice, Lucile	Biology	1936	1938
† Richardson, Lula M.	French	1931	1932
Riggs, Charles H., Jr.	History	1954	
Riggs, Maida Leonard	Physical Education	1939	1943
Ringer, Eleanor M.	English	1948	1951
* Robertson, Martha Waller	Music	1910	1915
Robinson, Florence Horton	Latin and Greek; Art	1927	1932
		1932	1953
* Rodgers, Jean	Chemistry	1929	1932
Rogers, Harriet Howell	Physical Education	1924	
Rogers, Nan	Physical Education	1945	1947
Rohrlich, George F.	Economics and Government	1942	1945
		1908	1910
* Rollins, Helen Collins	Music	1928	
Rollins, Marion Benedict	Religion	1908	1913
Rollins, Wallace Eugene	Religion; Chaplain	1934	1937
Rood, Louise	Music	1937	1942
Rossetti, John	Modern Languages	1942	1942
† Rush, Margaret	Government	1924	1928
Russell, Frances Baker	Modern Languages	1952	
Rust, John B.	Modern Languages	1922	1924
Salathe, Albert	Chemistry	1953	1954
Salinas, Jaime Pedro	Spanish	1908	1909
Salter, Katherine Eleanor	Music	1922	1923
Salyer, Sandford Meddick	English	1937	1954
* Sanford, Eva Matthews	History	1920	1925
Schiffer, Josephine	Home Economics	1949	1951
Schmoll, Clorinda	Music	1939	1939
† Schwartz, Elizabeth R.	Biology	1927	1944
Scott, Ewing C.	Chemistry	1918	1919
Searce, Rose Dudley	Chemistry	1918	1919
* Searle, Mary	Mathematics	1921	1927
		1909	1910
Selfridge, Mildred	French		
Shaw, Caroline Noble	Domestic Science		

† One semester or less

\* Known deceased

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## APPENDIX

Name	Subject	Came to Sweet Briar	Stayed until
† Shay, Robert P.	Economics	1947	1947
Shlakman, Vera	Economics	1937	1938
Short, Raymond W.	English	1941	1946
* Simrall, Josephine P.	Psychology	1916	1919
† Sirlin, Rosalie Sutherland	Music	1955	1956
Sisson, Grace M.	Biology	1922	1923
Smith, Ella L.	History	1917	1918
Smith, Jean P.	English	1928	1929
Smith, Luke M.	Sociology	1952	1953
Smith, Robert C.	Art	1945	1947
Sparrow, Caroline L.	History	1907	1912
Speer, Margaret Bailey	English	1923	1924
Sprague, Elizabeth F.	Biology	1949	
Staael, Nora B.	Physical Education	1932	1939
Steady, Frederick W.	Psychology	1922	1923
Steuer, Gertrude	German	1949	1950
Stevenson, Louisa Stone	Chemistry	1913	1915
† Stimson, Dorothy	History	1956	1956
Stochholm, Johanne	English	1929	
Stone, Isabelle	Physics	1918	1923
Straus, Hannah A.	History	1949	1950
† Street, James H.	History	1950	1950
Stücklen, Hildegard	Physics	1943	1956
Swan, Alfred	Music	1921	1922
Swett, Louise Freeman	Physical Education	1952	1955
Tait, Marion	Greek and Latin	1940	1941
Telle, Marie D.	French	1938	1939
* Thatcher, Anna S.	English	1918	1924
Thompson, Dorothy D.	Chemistry	1944	
Thomson, Janet	Music	1915	1916
Thornton, Susan Baker	English	1926	1927
Timberlake, Nannie	Latin	1914	1915
* True, Harriet M.	French	1912	1913
Tucker, Eleanor Selden	Biology	1906	1907
† Turner, Lisle	Physical Education	1939	1940
Turner, William C.	Physics and Mathematics	1954	1955
		1950	1952
Uhlfelder, Myra	Greek and Latin	1950	1952
Umbreit, Lucile	Music	1937	
Vicari, Emilia	Biology	1924	1926
Vogelback, Arthur L.	English	1955	
† Voorhis, Anne	Physical Education	1954	1954
Wagner, Marcelia	Botany	1918	1920

† One semester or less

\* Known deceased

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# APPENDIX

Name	Subject	Came to Sweet Briar	Stayed until
Wailles, Bertha Pfister	German	1923	1924
	German and Sociology	1924	1932
Wainwright, Beatrice	Sociology	1932	
Wallace, Dorothy E.	Music	1924	1931
Ward, Aileen	Chemistry	1920	1921
† Watkins, Edwin	Modern Languages	1910	1916
Watkins, Isabel	English	1950	1951
Waugh, Jennie	Physical Education	1923	1924
Weaver, Miriam H.	English	1938	1939
Weihe, Kenneth G.	Music	1925	1953
Weisz, Georgette	English	1947	1950
† Wells, Leah I.	Physical Education	1953	1954
Wengert, Egbert Semman	Physics	1929	1930
	Government	1941	1942
		1945	1947
Whetstone, Helen	Physical Education	1932	1935
White, Orland E.	Biology	1955	
Wilcox, Jean	Spanish	1923	1926
Wilcox, Lois	Art	1933	1940
Wilder, Susanna	Religion	1947	1948
Wilkinson, Winston	Music	1923	1930
Williams, Evelyn	Music	1918	1924
Williams, Thyllis	Chemistry	1939	1942
Willis, Mildred Drefs	Music	1953	1954
Willis, Thomas C.	Music	1953	1954
Wilson, Mary Elizabeth	English	1946	1948
Worman, Elizabeth D.	English	1944	1945
• Worthington, Helen Coale	French	1911	1912
		1924	1925
• Worthington, Hugh S.	Modern Languages	1910	1944
Wright, E. Katharine	Chemistry	1952	1953
• Young, Helen F.	Music	1906	1925
Zechiel, Ernest R.	Music	1933	1954

† One semester or less

• Known deceased

# APPENDIX III

## Presidents of the Student Government Association

1906-1907	Ina Larkins	1931-1932	Alice Weymouth
1907-1908	{ Bessie Jackson	1932-1933	Marjorie Burford
	{ Frances Murrell	1933-1934	Julia Sadler
1908-1909	Annie Powell	1934-1935	Lida Read Voigt
1909-1910	Annie Powell	1935-1936	Marion Taylor
1910-1911	Mary Virginia Parker	1936-1937	Nancy Nalle
1911-1912	Eugenia Buffington	1937-1938	Janice Wiley
1912-1913	Eugenia Buffington	1938-1939	Mary Mackintosh
1913-1914	Rebekah Patton	1939-1940	Elizabeth Lee
1914-1915	Harriet Evans	1940-1941	Lucy Ruth Lloyd
1915-1916	Margaret Banister	1941-1942	Eugenia Burnett
1916-1917	Virginia Sandmeyer	1942-1943	Anne McJunkin
1917-1918	Marianne Martin	1943-1944	Margaret Gordon
1918-1919	Isabel Wood	1944-1945	Ruth Longmire
1919-1920	Helen Johnston	1945-1946	Marjorie Christian
1920-1921	Fanny Ellsworth	1946-1947	Judith Burnett
1921-1922	Alice Earley	1947-1948	Marion Bower
1922-1923	Virginia Stanbery	1948-1949	Margaret Preston
1923-1924	Margaret Nelson		Hodges
1924-1925	Eugenia Goodall	1949-1950	Mary Nancy Nelson
1925-1926	Elizabeth Rountree	1950-1951	Jean Duerson
1926-1927	Nar Warren Taylor	1951-1952	Susan Hobson
1927-1928	Jocelyn Watson	1952-1953	Julia Dale Hutter
1928-1929	Esther Tyler	1953-1954	Mary Dallis Johnson
1929-1930	Norvell Royer	1954-1955	Barbara Plamp
1930-1931	Mary Lynn Carlson	1955-1956	Kathryn Smith

# APPENDIX IV

## Presidents of the Sweet Briar Alumnae Association

Mrs. William T. Hodges (Annie Powell, '10)	1910-1914
Mrs. Russell Walcott (Eugenia Buffington, '13)	1914-1915
Miss Henrietta Washburn, '14	1915-1916
Mrs. Alice Swain Zell, '14	1916-1917
Miss Margaret Banister, '16	1917-1919
Miss Marianne Martin, '18	1919-1920
Miss Margaret McVey, '18	1920-1926
Miss Margaret Banister, '16	1926-1930
Mrs. William T. Hodges (Annie Powell, '10)	1930-1932
Mrs. Joseph A. Gilchrist, Jr. (Edna Lee, '26)	1932-1936



## APPENDIX

Mrs. Frederick Valentine (Elizabeth Taylor, '23)	1936-1938
Mrs. Howard Luff (Isabel Webb, '20)	1938-1940
Mrs. Robert H. Scannell (Fanny Ellsworth, '21)	1940-1941
Miss E. Gertrude Prior, '29 ( <i>acting president</i> )	1941-1942
Miss Martha von Briesen, '31	1942-1944
Mrs. E. Webster Harrison (Mary Huntington, '30)	1944-1946
Mrs. Frederic W. Scott (Elizabeth Pinkerton, '36)	1946-1948
Mrs. Thomas K. Scott (Amelia Hollis, '29)	1948-1952
Mrs. Edward C. Marshall (Edith Durrell, '21)	1951-1952
	( <i>acting president</i> )
Mrs. William H. Steeble (Louisa Newkirk, '23)	1952-1956
Mrs. Leonard M. Horton (Gladys Wester, '30)	1956-1958

## APPENDIX V

### *Executive Secretaries of the Sweet Briar Alumnae Association*

Mrs. Stillman F. Kelley II (Katharyn Norris, '26)	1927-1929
Mrs. Stanley K. Hornbeck (Vivienne Barkalow, '18)	1929-1938
Miss Helen McMahon, '23	1938-1947
Mrs. Charles P. McCurdy, Jr. (Harriet Shaw, '37)	1947-1950
Mrs. W. Clark Schmidt (Margaret Cornwell, '37)	1950-1955
Mrs. Ernest M. Wood, Jr. (Elizabeth Bond, '34)	1955-

## APPENDIX VI

### *Dates of Buildings*

Academic, Carson, Gray, Refectory, 1906; Randolph, 1908; Manson, 1910; Carl Grammer, 1912; Boxwood Inn, 1920; Fletcher, Mary Harley Infirmary, Fergus Reid, 1925; Mary Helen Cochran Library, 1929; Book Shop, 1930; Daisy Williams Gymnasium, 1931; William Bland Dew, 1956.

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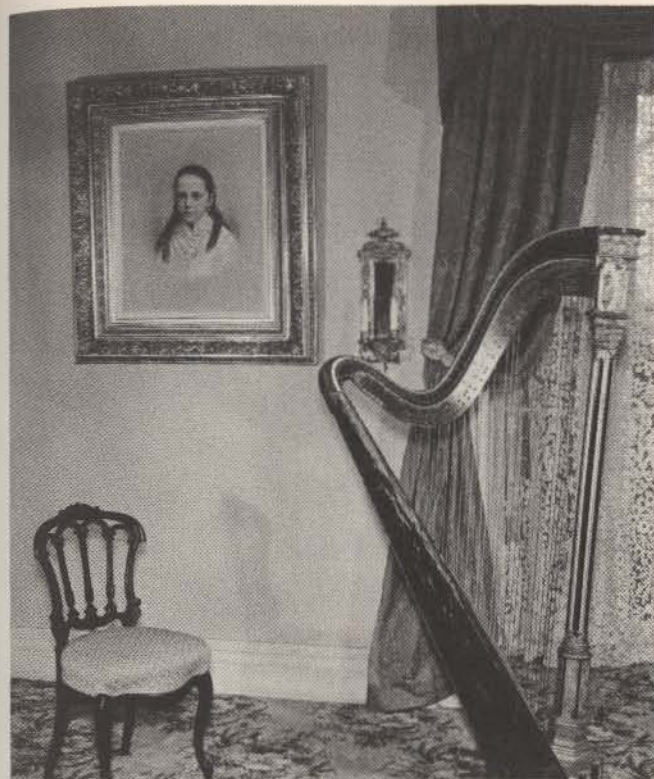
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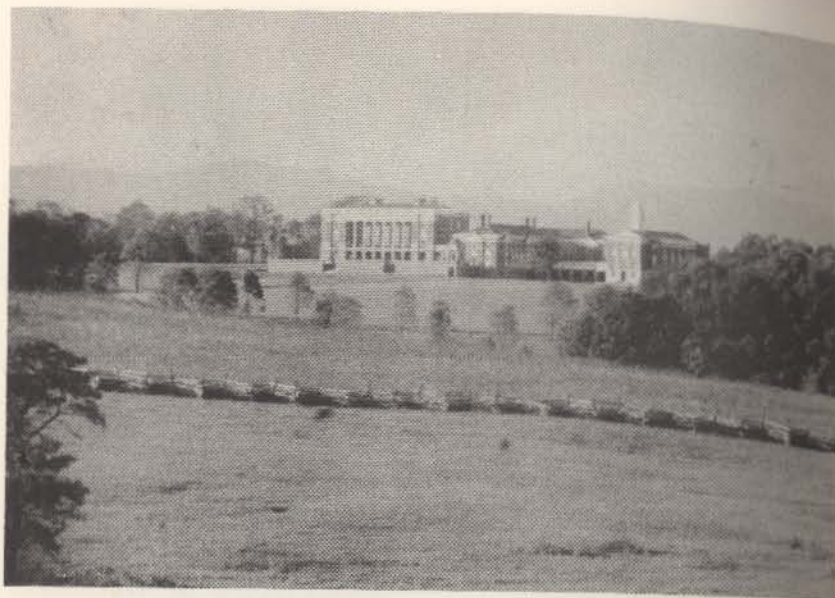


Daisy's portrait and harp



Sweet Briar House





The new college in its first year



Amherst County students and their tutor, Mr. Arthur Gray jr.



Miss Benedict



Dr. McBryde jr. and Dr. Humphreys

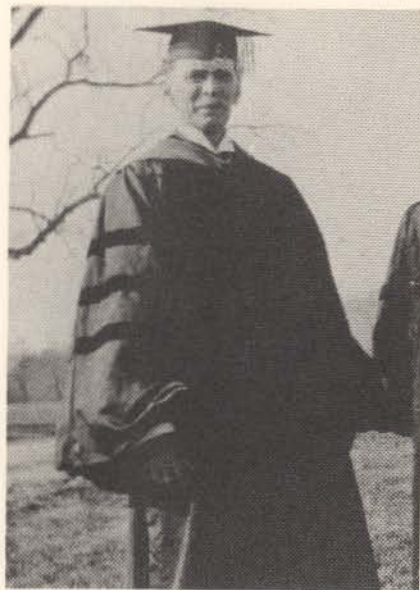


Dr. Harley and Miss Mattie

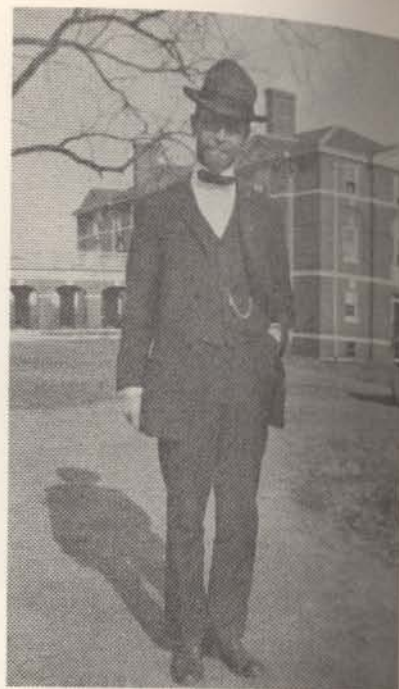


Faculty procession, including Benedict, Harley, G. Patteson, and Young





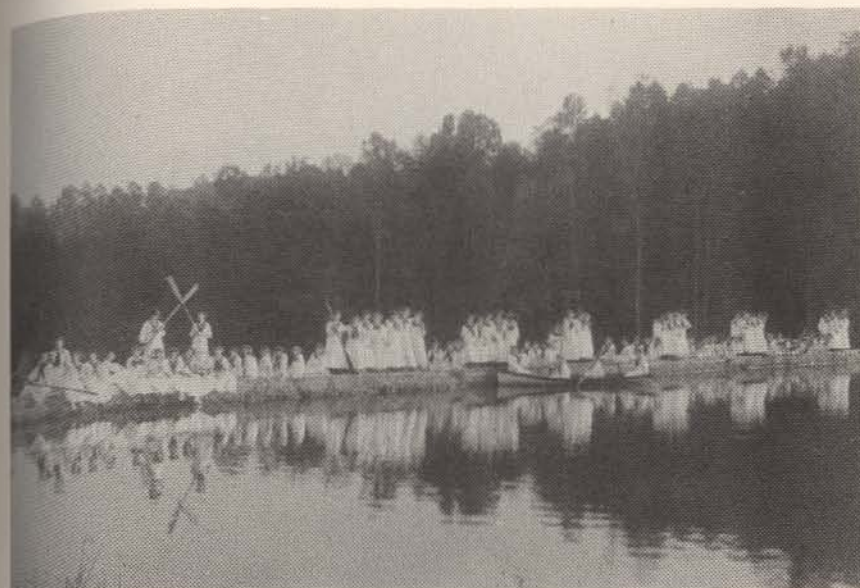
Mr. Manson



Mr. Dew



The Walker family



Boating Club



Refectory in 1906





Art Studio



The first library



Mrs. Williams' carriage



Saturday noon, off for Lynchburg





May Queen dancing on the green



First Class Day



First graduating class



Playing three-deep in front of the refectory



Sheep grazing on the lawns



Basketball, 1914





First airplane on campus



Red Cross class, 1918



"Bus" Rhea's omnibus



The Cupola, a favorite gathering place

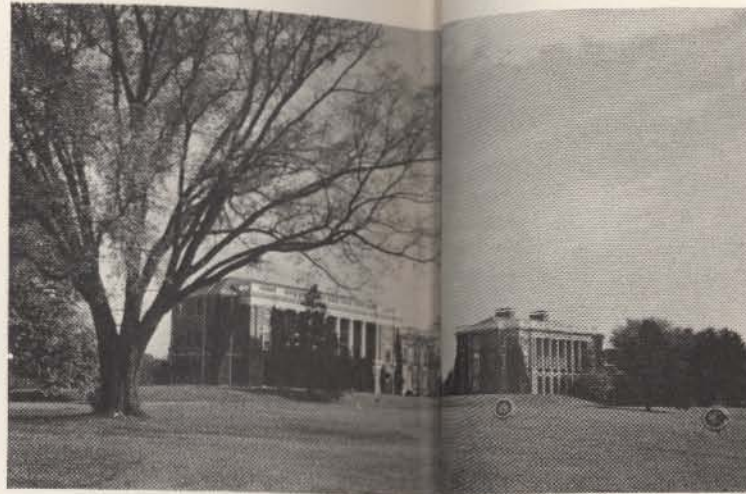


May Day, 1920





Miss McVea



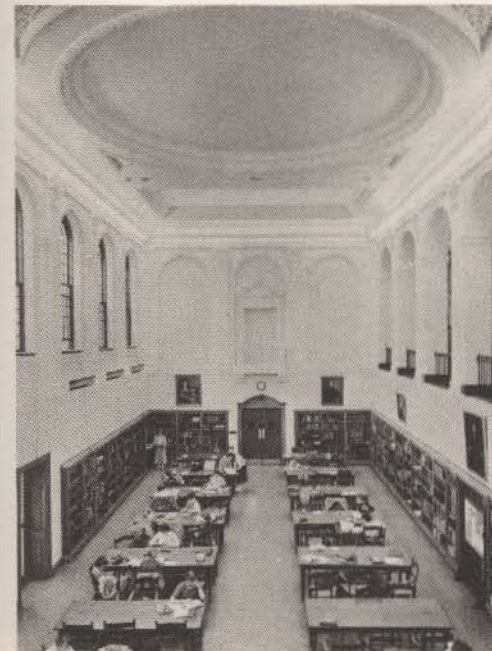
Fletcher, Mary Helen Cochran Library, Academic



Miss Glass

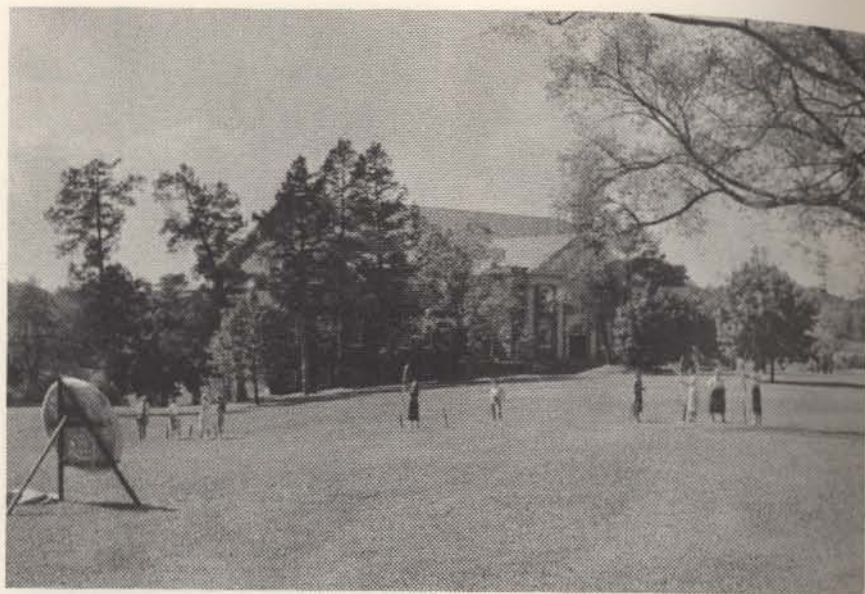


Miss Dutton



Reading room, Mary Helen Cochran Library





Daisy Williams Gymnasium



Boathouse



Hockey is still the favorite fall sport

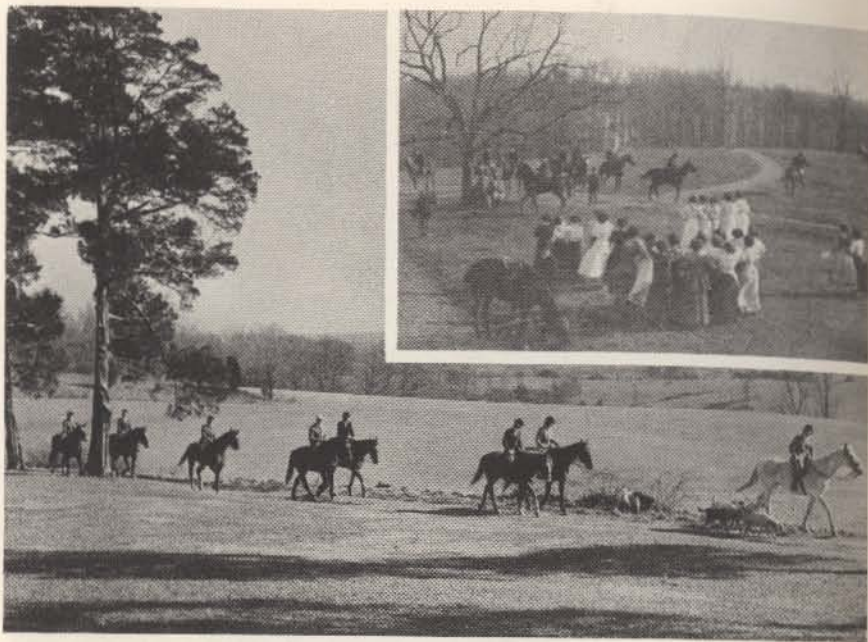


Outing Cabin on Paul's Mountain



Snowballing, an unscheduled event





INSET: The first Thanksgiving Hunt, 1906  
Drag hunts are held once or twice a week



May Day ballet, 1917



Book Shop and Post Office traffic



Dance group, 1937





An early May Day, held in the Boxwood Circle



Everyone took part in the Elizabethan May Day, 1937



May Day, 1956



Good Queen Meta, 1937



Dr. Barker and Miss Glass, soda fountain volunteers in World War II



Miss Glass directing a political campaign, 1949





Women's Land Army volunteer sorting peaches, 1944



Miss Glass with Lt. Commander Mildred McAfee, 1943



Seven seniors were inducted into the WAC, April 1944



Step-singing is an old tradition





Mrs. Lyman



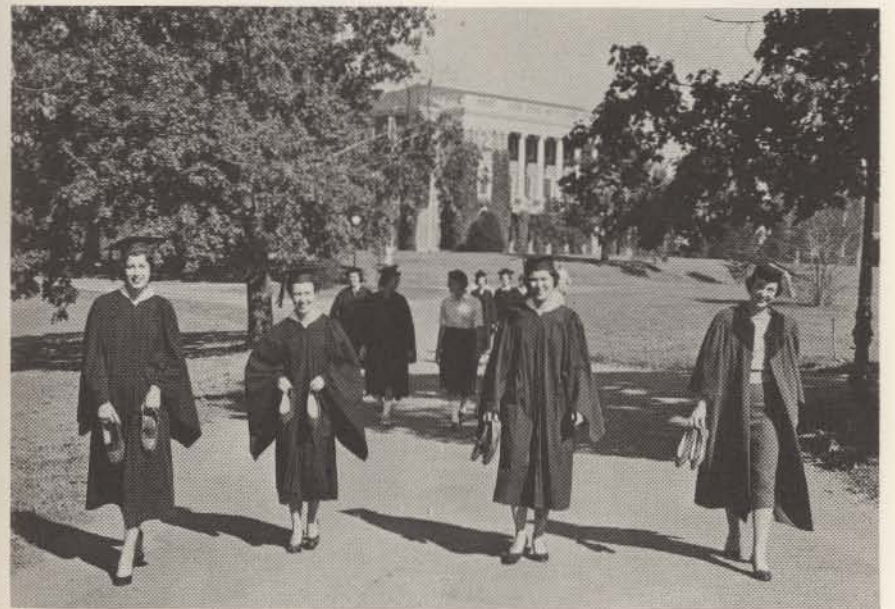
Miss Lucas



Miss Lucas with foreign students

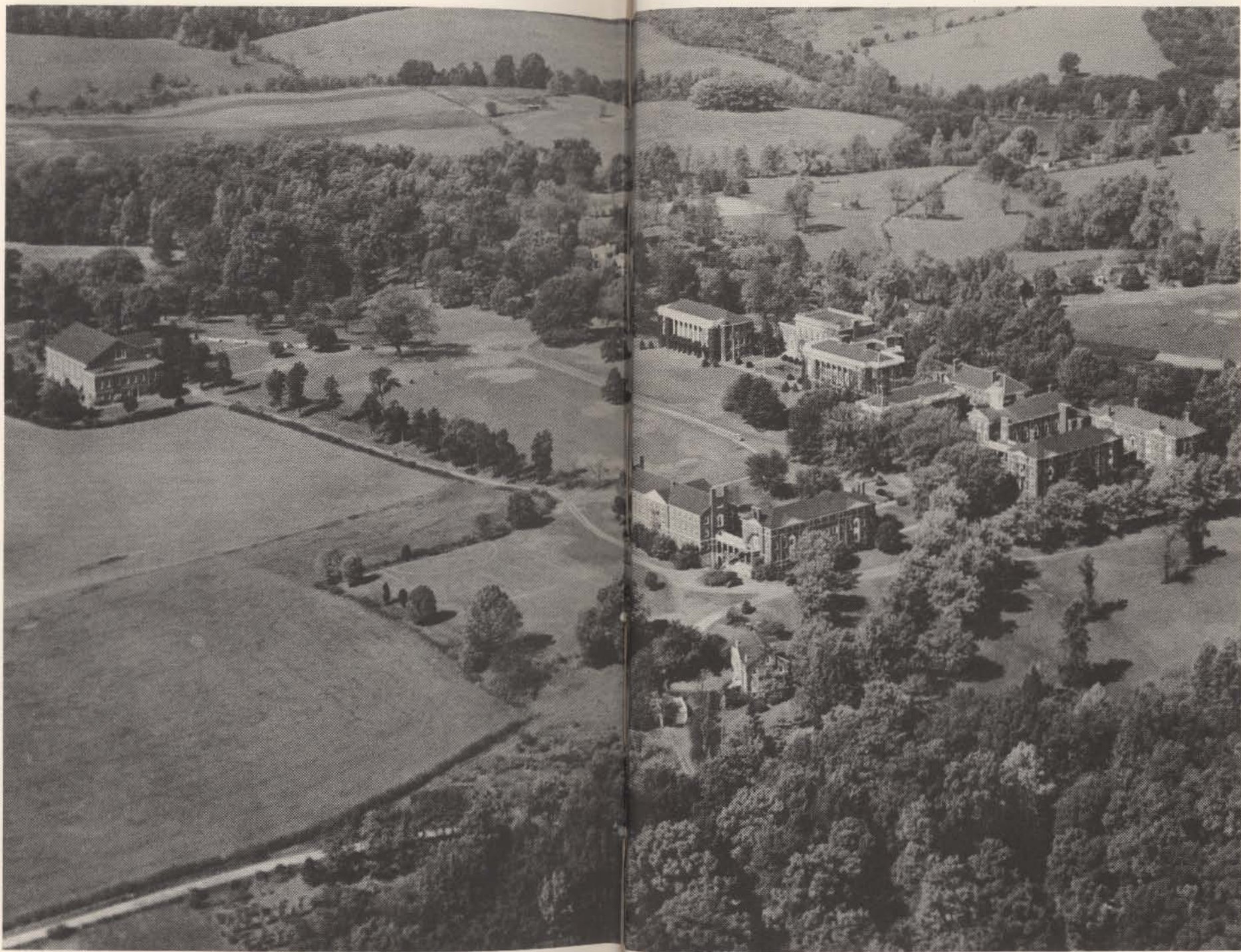


Founders' Day: Dr. Rollins, Mrs. Pannell, Miss Pearl, Miss Glass



Seniors carrying loafers to walk up Monument Hill on Founders' Day









Faculty procession: Dr. Connor, Dr. Rollins, Miss Pearl, Miss Glass, President Lucas, Dr. Edwards



Creative Writers' Workshop, with Evelyn Eaton



Mrs. Pannell

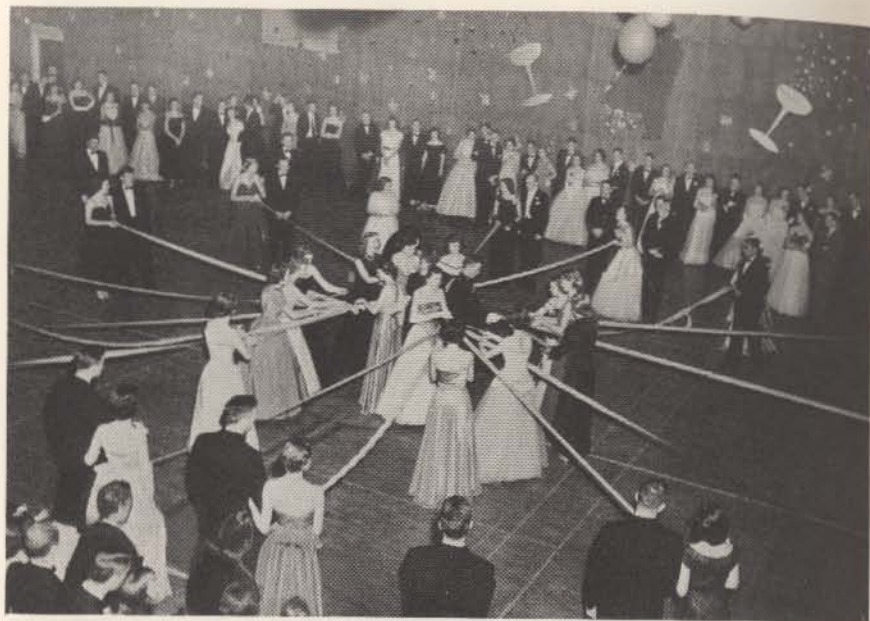


Mrs. Pannell and German schoolboy



Classes sometimes meet outdoors





Midwinter dance figure, 1950



Spring day on the lake



Patchwork Day promotes spring clean-up



Paint and Patches play, "The House of Bernarda Alba," 1950



Impromptu concert, Sweet Tones and University of Virginia Octet





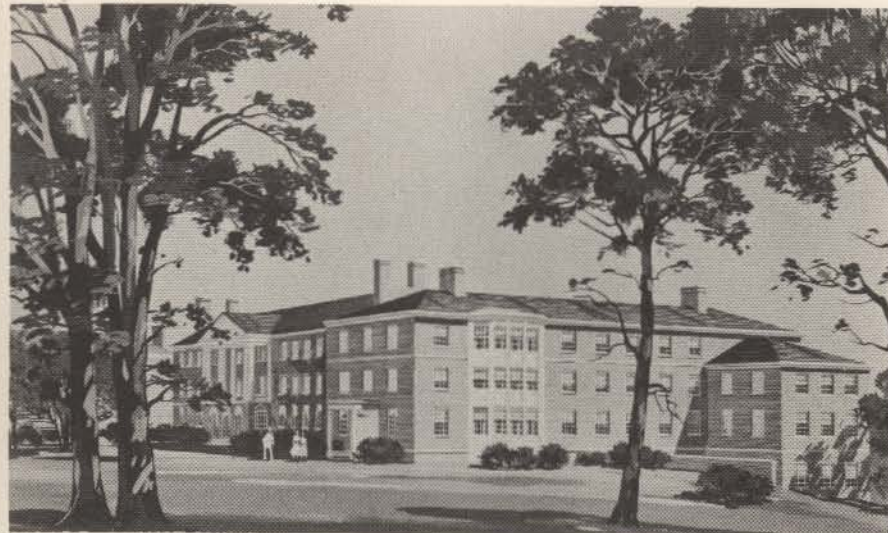
Amherst County students, past and present: Bertha Pfister Wailes '17 and Betty Gallo '58



Sterling Jones and Mrs. Dew at cornerstone ceremony, April 1956



"Steps of Reunion," alumnae play, June 1956, Dr. Guion at the top



Architect's drawing, William Bland Dew Hall, completed in 1956

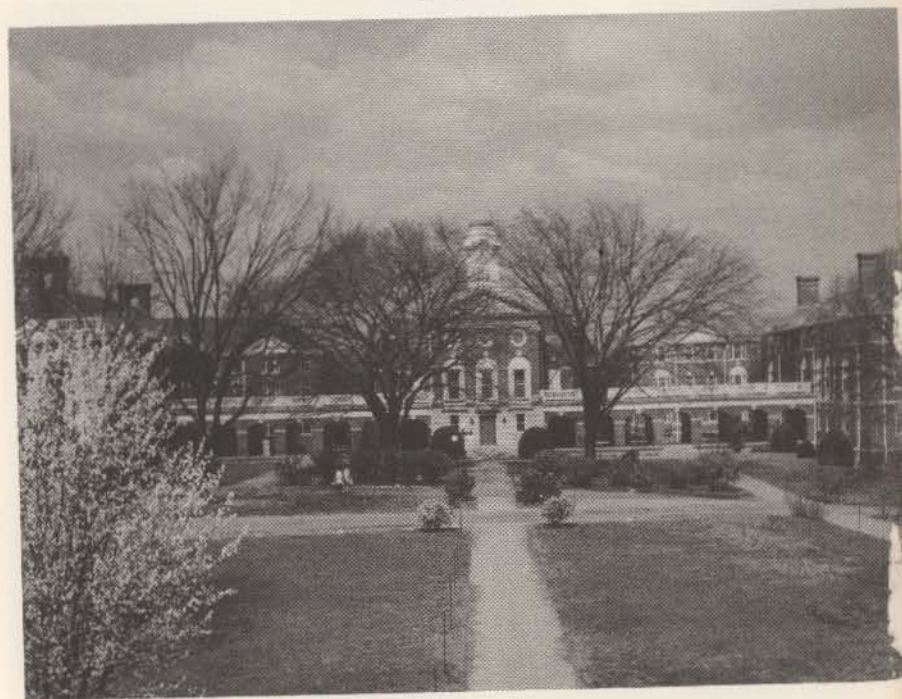


Charter Day principals, 1956: Miss Fraser, Mrs. Pannell, Miss Glass, Miss Morenus





Changing classes



Spring on the quadrangle



